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ABSTRACT

The document contains scripts, study guides, and discussion questions for two ethnic dramas suitable for ethnic studies at the secondary school level. The first, "A Glass Rose," an adaptation of the novel by Richard Bankowsky, depicts the hopes, dreams, and problems of a Polish immigrant family who reside in an ethnic neighborhood in an industrial city. The second drama, "First Person Dreams," is a collage of excerpts from stories, poems, plays, letters, and diaries. The excerpts express views of self, family, and American life, each from a different ethnic point of view. The document also contains a synopsis, study questions, and a rehearsal log for the play, "Philadelphia, Here I Come!" by Brian Friel, which concerns the actions and thoughts of a young man on the night before he leaves Ireland for America. Inquiries about video tapes of still photographs to accompany readings of the two dramas may be directed to Clement L. Valletta, Ethnic Heritage Studies Program, King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 18711. (Author/KC)

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ETHNIC DRAMA: VIDEO-TEXTS AND STUDY GUIDES

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PREFACE

Many more people than could be included in this collection contributed to our understanding of ethnic experience. With them we explored the family, regional, and folk sense of life defining ethnicity. In our time, an ethnic ID may also serve as a rallying flag for the socially active in America and throughout the world. To others it may connote a kind of stigma or unnecessary concern better forgotten.

Yet the ethnic like some half-forgotten folktale kept reappearing in our talks with tradition-bearers and in reading many folklorists, novelists, philosopher-scientists, and anthropologists. Ethnic or multicultural diversity made sense within what anthropologists describe as culture, the ways people of a particular time and place traditionally define and satisfy their needs. This approach avoids the narrow concept of ethnic experience and also opens up the whole cultural context of learning (about which more is said in the Introduction).

Those universal themes of parent and child, dream and reality, environment and individual remain part of the examined life — for which the ethnic can serve as dramatic metaphor and as factual experience. This collection offers metaphor and stories whose "facts" the users must authenticate in their own histories. Each work includes a diversity of materials that have upon close examination the unities we discover in many of our own experiences.

The materials take three forms: "First Person Dreams," a multicultural collage of ideas, voices, and images of America in dream and reality (with study guide); "Glass Rose," a one act play about Stanislaw Machek and his family (with study guide); Direction and study guides for Brian Friel's, Philadelphia, Here I Come! illustrating to students and faculty how they can participate in this drama or another of their own liking to understand more about "personal, regional, and folk histories."

Since video accompanies this text, teachers are encouraged to present the materials more than once, to stop and go back when desirable, and to have students participate as much as possible. The study guide can be useful; however, teachers may want to devise with students their own questions and projects.

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Introduction

To what extent do students value learning in their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness? Many teachers know what a recent study demonstrates, that "cultural attitudes, values, and taste for schooling play an even larger role than aptitude and money" in the amount of schooling people get (Christopher Jencks, et al., Inequality, New York: Basic Books, 1972, p. 141). By reclaiming values of informal learning in the family, neighborhood, and region ethnic or multicultural studies may enable teachers to reclaim for their students the value of formal learning in the schools. Curricula, separated further and further from the informal context, are not only ineffective but unsupportive of the objectives of formal learning. In 1966, the Coleman Report stated: "Schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context." If so, students and teachers need to recreate the cultural attitudes and values necessary to learning; this need persists despite the concepts about I.Q. behavioral objectives, hyperactivity, bureaucratic organization. This need should be addressed because of the declining SAT scores over the last ten years; and the findings of a 1973 Kettering Foundation Report, Adolescent Other Citizens and Their High Schools, p. xvi:

> The Task Force members concluded that, unless many of the problems highlighted in this report receive high priority on our nation's work list, the vitality of our free public educational system will be in jeopardy. Though its members are not alarmists, the Task Force concluded that the democratic foundations of our country will be threatened if solutions to these problems are not found.
>
> Within the lifetime of men still active:
>
> - Mass communication, especially television, has destroyed the vitality of local and regional cultures, placing on the school greater burdens of acculturation to a vague, undefinable national ethic.
>
> - The automobile and the national highway network have accentuated the rootlessness of an already restless society.
>
> - Technology has changed people's perceptions of their relationship to their own work and increasingly separated the home from the job.
>
> - Affluence has made children, and especially adolescents, consumers on a grand scale and thus subject as individuals to all the pressures of the consumer society.

> Family ties have weakened everywhere; and the home nexus from which students come — and to which they must return every evening — has become increasingly unstable and insecure.
>
> The institution of the high school is not insulated from these changes in the larger society.

The ethnic especially enlivened by folk and regional experience can illuminate the entire curriculum as it has the actual roots of science, language, and society. Educators can decide, for instance, to study how modern technology expresses in part the cultural and regional attitudes of the northern English in the 1700's; how folk and dialect streams run through language and music; or how voting, club preference, family life, sometimes have ethnic roots. The point should not be overstated. The curriculum has an ethnic dimension no more or less than any other. Whole areas of the curriculum should remain "objective," i.e., concerned mainly with skills and techniques. Even so, the essential values and attitudes of ethnic, folk, and regional life can help motivate students in all areas of the curriculum.

Curriculum specialists ought to subordinate performance-based behavioral objectives to human needs, values, and attitudes in many ways:

National events — wars, depression, immigration, technological revolutions — happen to the student and in some knowable way to his family and region. But textbooks rarely describe just how. Textbooks like best sellers and frozen foods must appeal to a national market. Textbook writers and AV developers generally regard the regional as "provincial," the folk as "quaint," the neighborhood as "rapidly changing." Even history books pay market tribute with, for instance, in one text, twenty pages on fashions of the 1920's and two paragraphs on the Holocaust! Statistics are invariably used to describe superficial national events; regional American literatures are turned into verbal puzzles, explication de texte, or "local color;" and science and mathematics become games made intricate with calculators and computers. If technologies matter most, then of course I.Q., grades, and upward mobility are what schooling is really all about. Still educators have to ask themselves whether this emphasis is what it should be all about. At least, they have the obligation to let the student decide if it should be. And he cannot unless he sees how his informal learning experience influences his school learning — and by extension — how bureaucratic influences have affected and will affect that informal learning experience.

Diverse kinds of curriculum materials enable the student to draw implications about his life from the lives — not only the "contributions" — of others: characters in a play, businessmen, scientists, oral accounts by tradesmen. The whole point is to turn the relationship between formal and informal learning into an explicit part of the curriculum, to illustrate how family life affects and is affected by the school and other bureaucratic forms, to see just how the workman values his job and communal life, and to seek alternative answers if even well-planned technological and bureaucratic responses to human problems don't work.

It is true that many students live in a region or neighborhood for only a short time. Parents of many children are divorced. Still, ethnic, regional, and folk experiences of all sorts can be studied and enjoyed. A student without roots can participate in diverse ways. He can learn that folk backgrounds exist, may be worth pursuing, and have culture and language just as his region has a dialect and distinct way of life.

Multicultural insight is directly proportional to self-knowledge. The more we know about our own culture and how it influenced us the better we understand others. Understanding is just the beginning. Just as an architect, scientist, or writer searches for inspiration to build his design, so too can a student learn about structure from a proverb, riddle, tapestry, or dance. As the multicultural environment disappears in the suburbs — if not the cities — into the psyche and from there into the homogeneous mass society, a student's imagination may become as limited as his surroundings. As television and the other mass media entertain him in the role of catered consumer, the student may find little of interest in processes which take time, require a clear view of cause and effect, and the capacity for "delayed gratification." Students who rapidly figure the academic puzzles will do fairly well, but what are they and the others missing as textbooks and curricula limit or drop demanding subjects like foreign languages, grammar, mathematics? Comparable scores of the SAT have been falling in virtually all subjects over the last ten years despite sophisticated concepts about learning instrumented with billions of dollars. The reasons for this are too involved to discuss here. Our claim is only that learning skills without context diminishes learning both context and skills.

We know that historically students were motivated to learn in a concrete regional and cultural context. Students could distinquish between reality and advertisements of universal happiness in some future, trans-regional place.

This American dream can be described as collective obsessions for power, wealth, youth, beauty mirrored and fostered by corporate enterprise. Much social disorder may result from seeking false dreams, symptomatic of changing ways to find the stability once had in the family and folk culture. Americans seek the dream and respond to their problems within a peer group — from the childhood gang or clique, to the club, the union, association, and finally with the bureaucratic team. Thus each person can have careers, associates, and experiences of his own choosing. Why not maintain within the schools this complement of the individual with society, despite its limitations?

Only because the recent, radical changes in life style are both cause and effect of the move from the historical emphasis upon family and region to the present conditions (referred to in the Kettering Report, above). While Americans have grown up within traditional ties, new generations will have few models if not to emulate and integrate with the present, at least, to compare with their own experience. All this was more possible in earlier generations because there was a relatively strong family and communal life. Now that life has changed abruptly because of the powerful results of mass communications, technology, and affluence. The school by an uncritical reflection of these results has contributed ironically to the worsening situation..

Designed for the teacher of literature, history, and social studies, the study materials in this guide present the "affective" as well as cognitive dimensions of multicultural experience. Although important to have students learn skills of literary and social analysis, it is also necessary to have them realize what the bureaucratic development of techniques has had on their families and regions. They should see the values within folk cultures, the transitions into the present, and the costs as well as the results. The study guide offers ways to have students and teachers understand their own folk backgrounds, that of other groups, and the possibilities for continued folk and regional studies.

If we value the shared democratic experience as did our forefathers, we can create the future by recreating the presentness of the past. We can use oral and visual forms of media circuiting the "global village." What could be more in keeping with the multicultural heritage of America. The dreams our forefathers had of democracy can inspire the future; and their experiences can help us know who we are:

"In recognition of the heterogeneous composition of the Nation and of the fact that in a multiethnic society a greater understanding of the contributions of one's own heritage and those of one's fellow citizens can contribute to a more harmonious, patriotic, and committed populace, and in recognition of the principle that all persons in the educational institutions of the Nation should have an opportunity to learn about the differing and unique contributions to the national heritage made by each ethnic group . . ."

Title IX - Ethnic Heritage Program

FIRST PERSON DREAMS

A Multi-Ethnic College

FIRST PERSON DREAMS

A Multi-Ethnic Collage

I

In our public school one year an appeal was made to every child to bring a can of food for the poor. The teachers didn't seem to realize we were the poor. We didn't either. Every kid in that public school, out of the goodness of his heart, went out and stole a can of food from a local grocery store. Our school had the best contributor record of any school in the city.

We are all Americans now, we are all successes now. And yet the most successful one I know now admits he can understand suicide — what before he was a success he never could understand. And so to what avail the finding of his dream? He went back to Europe and tried to live like a peasant again: To have them say enviously, "He died in that house in which he was born." "He was never more than an hour from his village, not in all his life," they may think.

No, really, we are all happier now. It is a better life. And, as my mother always said, "Never mind about being happy. Be glad you're alive."

My mother was as formidable a personage as she was a cook. She was not to be treated cavalierly. My oldest brother at sixteen had his own tin lizzie to further his career as the Don Juan of Tenth Avenue. One day my mother asked him to drive her to the market on Ninth Avenue, a five-minute trip. My brother claimed he was going to work on a new shift at the railroad. An hour later my mother saw him about to drive off with three pretty neighborhood girls. My mother dropped her black leather shopping bag and picked up a cobblestone with both hands. As we all watched in horror, she brought the boulder down on the nearest fender, demolishing it. Then she picked up her bag and marched off to Ninth Avenue to do her shopping.

In the summertime, I was one of the great Tenth Avenue Athletes but in the wintertime I became a sissy. I read books. I loved reading in the Hudson Guild where the librarian became a friend. I loved Joseph Altsheler's tales about the Senecas and the Iroquois. I discovered Doc Savage and the Shadow and then the great Sabatini. Part of my character to this day is Scaramouche, I like to think. Then at fifteen or sixteen I discovered Dostoevsky. When I finished The Brothers Karamazov, I understood for the first time what was really happening to me and the people around me. I had always hated religion

even as a child but now I became a true believer. I believed in art, a belief that has helped me as well as any other.

My mother looked upon this reading with a fishy eye. She saw no profit in it but since all her children were great readers, she was enough of a general to know not to fight so great an insubordination. And there may have been some envy. If she had been able to, she would have been the greatest reader of us all.

I had every desire to go wrong but I never had a chance. The family structure was too formidable.

I never came home to an empty house; there was always the smell of supper cooking. My mother was always there to greet me, sometimes with a policeman's club in her hand (nobody ever knew how she got it). But she was always there, or her authorized deputy, my older sister, who threw empty milk bottles at the heads of her little brothers when they got bad marks on their report cards.

When I came to my autobiographical novel, I planned to make myself the sensitive, misunderstood hero, much put upon by his mother and family. To my astonishment my mother took over the book and instead of my revenge I got another comeuppance. And all those old-style grim conservative types whom I hated, then pitied so patronizingly, they also turned out to be heroes. Heroes all around me. I never saw them.

And now I remember, all those impossible dreams strung out before me, waiting for me to choose, not knowing that the life I was living then, as a child, would become my final dream.

II

Older man is described:

Just give him ten more years to get all his kids through school, and give them a better start than he got.

He looked out the window, up at the summer sky that stood serene above the alley and the express building. He experienced a moment of intense clarity, and he saw what kind of a fight his kids would have, the same kind of a struggle that he'd gone through. He raised his arms.

"God make the kids tough, make them hard as iron, scrapping O'Neills! Make them strong and tough and hard like steel! And God, give them guts! God, they'll be workingmen, and they'll have to fight like workingmen. Give them fight, God, and two big fists!"

"God, don't give them flesh, make them steel and iron and wood! Make their jaws cement! Make them tough, tough as nails!"

"God teach them to take it because they gotta! Their old man, God, couldn't stand the gaff, please make them better men than him! God, I know the game, and it's beat me. Please don't let it beat them! God, God make them sluggers, and make them slug, and take it, and slug again. And when they get slugged down, make them get up, please, God! God, give them stone, brass, anything, but not a heart! God, make them hard, cold fierce, like white-hot hissing steel, with hams for fists, and brass for a heart."

"God, please give the kids a chance! Please make them better men than their old man! Please!"

Only ten more years, but nobody needed to tell Jim that he was slipping. A tall, half-wreck of a man, he returned to his chair in the department, dragging his right leg a trifle.

III

Woman's voice:
My letter to my sister in Europe: January 10, 1910

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received the letter with the wafer and I thank you for thinking of me, dear sister. Now, dear sister and brother-in-law, don't be angry if I don't write to you very often, but I don't know how to write myself and before I ask somebody to write time passes away, but I try to answer you sometimes at least. You ask me how much my boys and my man earn. My man works in an iron-foundry, he earns 9, 10, 12 roubles sometimes, and the boys earn 4 or 5 roubles. My dear, in America it is no better than in our country: whoever does well, he does, and whoever does poorly, suffers misery everywhere. I do not suffer misery, thanks to God, but I do not have much pleasure either. Many people in our country think that in America everybody has much pleasure. No, it is just as in our country, and the churches are like ours, and in general everything is alike. I wish to know with which son grandmother is. Write me. And who is farming on that land after Rykaczewski? Perhaps we shall yet meet some day or other, dear sister. I should like to see you, and my native country. I have nothing more to write, I kiss you both and your children. I wish you a happy and merry and good New Year. May this New Year bring you the greatest happiness possible. We wish it to you from our heart. The children kiss

auntie and uncle and their cousins.

We remain, well-wishing,

H. J. DABROWSKIS

My children, thanks to God, are not the worst now.

Man's voice:

My letter home: September 1, 1913

Dear mother, I have already worked back for the ship-ticket, now I will work for you (to send you money), for digging the potatoes in the autumn. We are both working with Ososki from Bartniki; we do the same work one near another. He greets his brother in Leszno. We both long terribly for our country. He left his wife and children on his farm, and we say to each other, "How they are suffering there alone." When he came from our country 2 months ago, he got at first good work in another city, in Naget. From Union City to Naget is one verst. But that factory stopped for a month, so now we are working together. When it starts, if it goes well, we shall both go there to work. We say to each other that when we earn some money we will soon return to our country, because now it is terribly hard in America; everything is dear, and it is difficult to get work. So I work as hard as I can in order to return soon to our country. I long terribly for my country; nothing gives me pleasure in America. We must be very attentive in our work, every hour, because if anything is bad we are without work. We went once with auntie to Waterbury to her boys, to those farms where they are, but we could not see them; on Sunday we walked about for half a day asking for them, but we could not find out where they are. In August terrible rains fell, and the mornings are cold now.

(ALEKSANDER)

IV

We don't want to say that school isn't good! It's good. But now it's too much and it's different. Children come out different from school. These new kids here, they don't like us too much, they even spit at us and throw stones. They don't understand us talking, they're like strangers! I have a grandchild here, I don't even know his name: Jefren — Jefron — Jeferne — who knows? Who can pronounce it? I can't say his name! I ask him, I say,

"Come, sweetheart, what is your name? Teach me." He yells at me, "Oh, shut up!" But what do they teach him at school? Not to respect old people? Maybe they know too much, maybe — maybe they're American. But you know how the old man said?

The old man said, "I wish I were a priest, who is called 'father' but has no children to raise."

Well. All of our folks were great musicians, great! Oh, this Cornet Band now in town! They're just trying to get somethin' done! This is — this is just a li'le shuffling thing, yeah! They learn at school, it's mostly school music, it's not — not natural! Before, oh, before they had big concert bands, two, three at the same time. They had national contests in Philadelphia and all around! My grandfather, every time he was seen, he always had that cornet under his arm, wherever he'd go! And he played and played all the time. American bands went to Philadelphia from all over the country to compete with our bands, you know?

He could play! But see? These people used to go play for fun, for drink. They used to bring the wine and the presutto they used to get together, see? Now, the young generation, they like to have these three or four-piece bands, orchestras, and they go play for — oh, for night clubs — things modern. They go for money, for money. It's the American way. In America they don't do it for the fun, or for drinks, they all go for money, money! And that's ruining music. The older folks, they used to do it to enjoy themselves and they had more touch, more passion, see? They liked to get together, but not now! Not these young people. But some of the older folks still do it occasionally.

V

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles.

Masonry was the great, revered art of my people. To have been accepted and honored by them you had to be both Vastese and a master mason; otherwise,

even if you were the King of England or the President of the United States you would have been contemptuously spurned. I have often heard them tell the tale that when the gnome-sized King Vittorio Immanuel came to Vasto with his panoplied train and addressed the Vastese, a paesano held up a trowel and shouted: "You spout of warriors, sir, but this building spoon is our bright and shining sword; can you wield it?"

"Nay, subject, I am your king and not a bricklayer."

"Then king of other Italys are you and no king of Vasto. Furthermore, cocko, you disappoint us for having but one head, and at that an eggplant of a noggin no different than ours!"

From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips.

The printed page was not necessary to the composition of the Iliad and Odyssey, nor to their circulation. "In every village," I was told in Croatia, "there is a library bought by peasants alone, and in winter they often come together to have some one read to them, not only newspapers but more solid literature, such as translations of Tolstoy, Turgenieff, and Dostoyevsky."

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

VI

DEBATE WITH THE RABBI

Howard Nemerov

You've lost your religion, the Rabbi said.
It wasn't much to keep, said I.
You should affirm the spirit, said he,

And the communal solidarity.
I don't feel so solid, I said.

We are the people of the Book, the Rabbi said.
Not of the phone book, said I.
Ours is a great tradition, said he,
And a wonderful history.
But history's over, I said.

We Jews are creative people, the Rabbi said.
Make something, then, said I.
In science and in art, said he,
Violinists and physicists have we.
Fiddle and physic indeed, I said.

Stubborn and stiff-necked man! the Rabbi cried.
The pain you give me, said I.
Instead of bowing down, said he,
You go on in your obstinacy.
We Jews are that way, I replied.

ILLUSTRIOUS ANCESTORS

Denise Levertov

The Rav
of Northern White Russia declined,
in his youth, to learn the
language of birds, because
the extraneous did not interest him; nevertheless
when he grew old it was found
he understood them anyway, having
listened well, and as it is said, 'prayed
with the bench and the floor.' He used
what was at hand — as did
Angel Jones of Mold, whose meditations
were sewn into coats and britches.
Well, I would like to make,
thinking some line still taut between me and them,
poems direct as what the birds said,
hard as a floor, sound as a bench,
mysterious as the silence when the tailor
would pause with his needle in the air.

ELEGY

John Ciardi

My father was born with a spade in his hand and traded it
for a needle's eye to sit his days cross-legged on tables

till he could sit no more, then sold insurance, reading
the ten-cent-a-week lives like logarithms from
the Tables of Metropolitan to their prepaid tombstones.

Years of the little dimes twinkling on kitchen tables
at Mrs. Fauci's at Mrs. Locatelli's at Mrs. Cataldo's
(Arrividerla, signora. A la settimana prossima. Mi saluta,
la prego, il marito. Ciao, Anna. Bye-bye.)
— known as a Debit. And with his ten-year button

he opened a long dream like a piggy bank, spilling the dimes
like mountain water into the moss of himself, and bought
ten piney lots in Wilmington. Sunday by Sunday
he took the train to his woods and walked under the trees
to leave his print on his own land, a patron of seasons.

I have done nothing as perfect as my father's Sundays
on his useless lots. Gardens he dreamed from briar tangle
and the swampy back slope of his ridge rose over him
more flowering than Brazil. Maples transformed to figs,
and briar to blood-blue grapes in his look around

when he sat on a stone with his wine-jug and cheese beside
him,
his collar and coat on a branch, his shirt open,
his derby back on his head like a standing turtle. A big
man he was. When he sang Celeste Aida the woods
filled as if a breeze were swelling through them.

When he stopped, I thought I could hear the sound still
moving.
— Well, I have lied. Not so much lied as dreamed it.
I was three when he died. It was someone else — my sister —
went with him under the trees. But if it was her
memory then, it became mine so long since

I will owe nothing on it, having dreamed it from all
the nights I was growing, the wet-pants man of the family.
I have done nothing as perfect as I have dreamed him
from old-wives tales and the running of my blood.
God knows what queer long darks I had no eyes for

followed his stairwell weeks to his Sunday breezeways.
But I will swear the world is not well made that rips
such gardens from the week. Or I should have walked
a saint's way to the cross and nail by nail
hymned out my blood to glory, for one good reason.

VII

My grandparents, I am sure, never guessed what it would cost them and their children to become "Americanized."

In their eyes, no doubt, almost everything was gain. From the oppression experienced by Slovaks at the hands of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the gain was liberty; from relative poverty, opportunity; from an old world, new hope. (There is a town in Pennsylvania, two hundred miles from where they now lie buried, called "New Hope.")

They were injured, to be sure, by nativist American prejudices against foreigners, by a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture, and even by an Irish church. (Any Catholic church not otherwise specified by nationality they experienced and described as "the Irish church.")

What price is exacted by America when into its maw it sucks other cultures of the world and processes them? What do people have to lose before they can qualify as true Americans?

For one thing, a lot of blue stars — and silver and gold ones — must hang in the window. You proved you loved America by dying for it in its wars. The non-English-speaking ethnic groups pride themselves on "fighting for America." When my father saw my youngest brother in officer's uniform, it was one of the proudest days of his life. . .even though it (sickeningly) meant Vietnam.

I don't have other figures at hand. But when the Poles were only four percent of the population (in 1917-19) they accounted for twelve percent of the nation's casualties in World War I. "The Fighting Irish" won their epithet by dying in droves in the Civil War.

There is, then, a blood test. "Die for us and we'll give you a chance."

One is also expected to give up one's native language. My parents decided never to teach us Slovak. They hoped that thereby we would gain a generation in the process of becoming full Americans.

They kept up a few traditions: Christmas Eve holy bread, candlelight, mushroom soup, fish, and poppyseed. My mother baked kolacky. Pirohi, however, more or less died with my grandmother, who used to work all day making huge, steaming pots of potato dumplings and prune dumplings for her grandchildren. No other foods shall ever taste so sweet.

My parents, so far as I know, were the first Slovaks in our town to move outside the neighborhoods traditional for our kind of people and move into the "American" suburbs. There were not, I recall, very many other Catholics in the rather large, and good, public school I attended from grades two until six. I remember Mrs. S., the fifth-grade teacher, spelling "Pope Pius" with an "o" in the middle, and myself with gently firm righteousness (even then) correcting her.

What has happened to my people since they came to this land nearly a century ago? Where are they now, that long-awaited fully Americanized third generation? Are we living the dream our grandparents dreamed when on creaking decks they stood silent, afraid, hopeful at the sight of the Statue of Liberty? Will we ever find that secret relief, that door, that hidden entrance? Did our grandparents choose for us, and our posterity, what they should have chosen?

FIRST PERSON DREAMS

Study Guide

Episode I by Mario Puzo from "Choosing a Dream" is about growing up in Hell's Kitchen in New York City.

I

What is revealed in the statement, "The teachers didn't seem to realize we were the poor?" "Seem" implies that the teachers "put on the appearance" of not knowing their students were poor. Did the teachers know that their students were poor but would not show that fact? The teachers' request for a "can of food for the poor" suggests a peculiar type of unawareness about the lives of their pupils. The statement, "We didn't either," reveals a lack of awareness even on the part of the poor themselves. Discuss this lack of awareness on the part of both teachers and students. Teachers and students felt a unity evidenced in the statement, "out of the goodness of his heart." How is this oneness of concern and lack of awareness part of the American scene, then and today? Discuss.

The statement, "We are all Americans now, we are all successes now," is tempered with his recognition "now". Why did success bring with it an understanding of self-destruction? What could returning to Europe have offered this individual? Why do we sometimes remain dissatisfied even after we get what we want? Our early life — in a neighborhood and with people we know very well — can be a source of understanding for our entire life. This successful man thought his early life in a peasant village was a better way to live than the way of success. It is necessary here to recreate by stressing the secure role of the individual within a close family, group, and traditional setting (of village, church, and work). Thus, the author's mother offers advice on happiness. Is her feeling different from the fellow who wanted to return to the village. Her reaction toward her son seems to define the difference between the reality of an American neighborhood and the nostalgic sense of returning to a European village.

When a mother went shopping in those days, she did not go to a supermarket, and select victuals by simply rolling the basket from one brightly lighted and variously stocked aisle to another. She walked from one store or stand to another, making careful purchases of food that was not processed or prepackaged. The purchases became heavier as the shopping tour progressed. So she spots her oldest son in his "tin lizzie" which he has probably bought for ten or fifteen dollars, "to further his cause as the Don Juan of Tenth Avenue." Relief was in sight. By her physical reaction, what is she "telling" her son about cars, good times, and respect? Imagine the embarrassment of Don Juan when mother went into action. Mother was certainly "as formidable a personage as she was a cook". If she hadn't acted in this and other similar ways, what would have been the result to family life?

The author became "one of the great Tenth Avenue Athletes." "Athlete" to him probably meant playing "stick ball" on the street, played with a broom stick and a rubber ball. It had its dangerous moments especially when one of the batters hit the ball and broke a window in one of the tenement apartments. There would be the mad scurrying of the players as they retreated into some hiding place, and this was accompanied by the shouts of the victim who might be doing his or her shouting in a foreign language. There would be the silent glances of the spectators who would be leaning out the tenement windows, their arms resting on a pillow placed on the window sill, seeking relief from the summer s heat, and a bit of recreation by watching the game of "stick ball" and the almost predictable events.

On the other hand, "Athlete" might mean the expert swimmer who, with the rest of the gang in the neighborhood would go for a swim diving off the piers into the dangerous, dirty Hudson River. But it was relief from the torrid heat and it was a form of recreation no matter how dangerous. Dangerous! Danger came from the sudden appearance of the "brass button blue coat" who would chase the pleasure seekers. There would be the grabbing of clothes, the dull thud of running bare feet as they sought safety.

Then there might be the awful moment when one of the pleasure seekers would dive off a pier and never come up. There would be the shouts for help.

"Athlete" might also mean the leader of the gang who would manage to loosen the screwed-on covers of the fire hydrant and turn on the water which flowed out like water from a passing horse. Again, there would be shouts of joy in seeking relief from the heat. But, again, there was the scurrying for a hiding place as the man in blue came toward them.

In the wintertime I became a "sissy". The word "sissy" here demonstrates another form of self-awareness. How is "sissy" a term others would use? One's imagination is a vital part of self. Through it man can dream. He can experience vicariously. The youth can identify with the characters in these books and he not only can escape his environment with books about the Iroquois, but also understand what was "really happening" to him and the people around him after reading Dostoevsky. He became a believer in art. And the libraries and museums of those days were available to him and of course they still are.

His mother could not understand her family's fascination for reading. Hers had been a more difficult youth with little time for reading. "My mother looked upon reading with a fishy eye." Yet, mother was envious. In her heart she knew its value. Her source of learning came from experience and from the oral tales — some centuries old — that she and her friends and relatives told one another.

The author now reveals a sinister secret. "I had every desire to go wrong but I never had a chance." Poverty and deprivation as they look at riches and plenty cause many a person to do things he normally would not do. But despite his situation and his desire he "never had a chance". Why? "The family situation was too formidable." The family would not permit it. He was never alone at home, mother was there and so was the comfortable odor of cooking food. Mother was the center of the family just as food is the core of the health of the individual, and if that were not enough, his mother knew how to use the "policeman's club". She represented authority, a loving concerned authority. His older sister understood one very important record, the report card, of family survival. For her brothers and sisters a good report meant individual survival, because of her accuracy with milk bottles. It is important to see how much caring affected Puzo and how much life there was within the family each day.

And so when the author came to write his autobiography (which is a formal way of trying to understand oneself) he recognized to his astonishment that he was surrounded by heroes especially within his family.

The awareness of others around him which he did not fully recognize as he was becoming a man had so vitally contributed to his childhood that the child became the father of the man. The novel the author prizes most is about his youth in that tenement with his mother and his brothers and sisters. It is titled, The Fortunate Pilgrim. All or part of that novel might be read to recreate the author's self-discovery, the turmoils faced by his family, and the continuing need to recreate the self by recreating one's autobiography.

II

In this section (from James T. Farrell's story, "Jim O'Neill") we meet Jim who is second or third generation American. He appears to be some type of clerk. He has just left his desk and walked over to a window. He is thinking about his family.

All he wants is "ten more years" to get his children "through school" and "give them a better start then he had". Education was the key to "better start." Jim dreamed the American dream but to him success was reflected in his children's achieving economic stability and the "better things of life" in the American way.

"He looked out the window, up at the summer sky that stood serene above the alley and the express building." This sentence contains images of the contrast between Jim's dreams and the harsh reality before him. "Window," "summer sky," "serene" in their own way represent the fulfillment of his dreams while "alley" and "building" represent what he was enduring.

"Intense clarity," "fight," "kids" and "struggle" describe his experience. He recognized that he was in a fight. Life must be better for his children, and it was, he felt, his responsibility that this was to be so. He did not want them to "struggle" as he had done and for so little. Suddenly, he turns to prayer, not a gentle meditative prayer but a hard defiant prayer.

It is a brutal prayer. What kind of commentary it is on the way one has to experience life in order to secure "the American dream"? It is a prayer to make his children like the blood and guts that goes into technology. A loving father prays to a loving God to make his children like "iron", "steel", "cement" and "nails". Is this an ironic prayer?! Here is a father praying to the God of all humanity to dehumanize his children. He is pleading with his God to make his children durable as inert matter is durable. Moreover, he is praying to the God of peace, "Give them fight, God, and two big fists"!

And then he admits defeat, "Their old man, God, couldn't stand the gaff"; "God I know the game, it's beat me." Again, he turns to God in behalf of his children. It is a shocking plea. "God, give them stone, brass, anything, but not a heart"! He is pleading with the God of compassion to make his children brutes.

And finally, "Please make them better men than their old man." Is this the prayer that Jim's immigrant forebearers, Irish, Italian, German, Polish, Jewish, etc., prayed for him? Their dreams, customs and religious beliefs were no longer reflected in him. Is this why they toiled in a new land and suffered the anguish of homesickness for their parents, brothers and sisters and friends?

All he pleaded for was "only ten more years". Ten more short years to make his children part of the American Dream! ". . . But nobody needed to tell Jim that he was slipping." Ironically, nobody told Jim that he had slipped. He was part of the American dream — his prayer revealed this fact. And so, "A tall, half-wreck of a man, he returned to his chair in the department, dragging his right leg a trifle."

And would Jim's son say of him at his requiem what Biff in Death of a Salesman said of his father, Willie Loman, "He had the wrong dreams. All, all wrong."

III

Why are letters from a newcomer to this country during the waves of immigration an important, unsurpassed source of information about American history? These letters among hundreds of others appear in William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America.

1. What is the significance of the word "wafer" remembering that the Christmas Eve dinner began with the family's having a wafer?
2. Why does the author ask her sister and brother-in-law not to be angry?
3. What is revealing about this admission?
4. Is there anything demeaning about it?
5. How does the mention of dollars belie the importance of the immigrant's notion that America's streets were "paved with gold"?
6. Why is America "No better than in our country"?
7. Cite the items that lead to the conclusion "in general everything is alike".
8. What are the worries of the author about the members of the family left at home in the Old Country?
9. Cite the sentences that indicate the author is truly homesick.
10. What is significant about the many references to the land?
11. What sentences indicate that there had been close family ties in the Old Country?
12. What economic, social and spiritual reasons were there for this closeness?

Do your parents have any letters at home that reveal the misery and suffering or success and happiness of their immigrant ancestors? Perhaps they would permit you to share such letters with your class.

In the second letter:

What does "worked back for the ship ticket" mean?

What does it reveal about the financial condition of the author and about one of the ways people emigrated to America.

Is there anything ironic about "Now I will work for you, for digging the potatoes in the Autumn"?

What does this statement indicate about the availability of manpower on the Old Country farm?

In what ironic way does the second sentence reveal man's "togetherness"? (Sent. 2)

What do the next three sentences reveal about homesickness? (Sent. 3-4-5)

Is employment for these immigrants stable or unstable? (Sent. 6-7-8-9)

Why do they want to"earn some money"? (Sent. 10-11)

Why are they disappointed in this country or rather what do they want from the new land? (Sent. 12)

Is the author happy with his job? (Sent. 13)

How does the closeness of family ties show up? (Sent. 14)

How does the last sentence contribute to the mood of the letter? (Sent. 15)

What are the points of similarity or dissimilarity between this letter and the first? You can adapt roles of immigrants and write about your feelings in letter or narrative form.

You can have some idea of how the immigrants felt by writing about your actual experiences being in a new place through travel, attending a new school or living in a new house, trying to cope with a different physical or mental state. Reconstruct what part of yourself sensed the difference and how and why you couldn't quite adjust. When you finally accepted your new environment what did you learn about yourself?

Conditions in Europe and America in the 1910's can be recreated from sources such as The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. European peasants — the term "peasant" may not seem so complimentary — actually lived in many different ways. Some were very secure, living close to relatives and fellow villagers, having more than enough land, enjoying a high degree of individuality and freedom because they made or raised much of what they used. Others were less secure for the opposite reasons — too little land, dependence upon a landlord, few relatives — and these led to emigration. By working very hard in America, usually at some industrial job, it was possible to return with money enough for more land. If one was young and single, there was time to earn enough to begin with more than could be inherited, and if need be, care for one's parents and grandparents. Thus, many of the necessities of life remained within the farming family and community: teaching the young, caring for the old, celebrating family feasts especially weddings, signifying each holiday both as religious holy day and as seasonal festivity.

Change is inevitable especially with the relationship of grandchild to grandparents. Perhaps this is because when grandparents were children, the home was the center of all activity and authority. Now the school has become the center of activity, but its authority has diminished.

1. Why do you think school is different than it was in your grandparents' time?
2. What is revealed about the "new kids"?
3. Is what is revealed here a reflection on the home? School? Home and school?
4. What is significant about the grandparent's inability to recognize and pronounce his grandchild's name?
5. What does the situation reveal about family ties?
6. What is significant about the grandchild's response?
7. Upon what institution, home or school, would you place the blame for the grandchild's response?
8. What values are you actually taught at school?
9. Should respect for old people be taught only in the school?
10. Where else should it be taught?
11. What is the significance of the word "American"?
12. Do you think that schools teach more significant values in other countries?
13. Was schooling as universal in grandfather's day as it is today?
14. Is the statement by the old man concerning "priest" funny or is he reflecting upon some personal disappointment?

1. What is the old man suggesting when he says, "All of our folks were great musicians"?
2. Do you think that he is exaggerating?
3. Do you think that the old man is envious of the music, "They learn at school"?
4. What do you know about the "national contests in Philadelphia and all around"?
5. What is he suggesting about the true musician when he says, "He played and played all the time?"
6. What is he suggesting about the American scene when he contrasts playing for "fun" and "money"?
7. Is he correct when he says, "They liked to get together, but not now"?

These are stories from a book by Carla Bianca, The Two Rosetos about two towns, one in Italy and the other in America. Rosetans from Italy cleared and settled Roseto in Pennsylvania beginning in 1887. The direct ancestors of the original settlers still live there, so you can see why they take such special interest in their grandchildren.

V

It has been said that the automobile and dress reflect the average American's sense of sculpture and style.

1. What does art mean to you?
2. Name some of the artists of which you are aware.
3. Name some of the means by which artists share their experiences.
4. What specifically, is "masonry"?
5. Why is the artist so important?
6. Why did the people of Vasto feel that the mason was greater than the ruler?
7. Why would anyone not a mason be "contemptuously spurned"?
8. Why did the paesani (townsmen) feel that the trowel was mightier than the sword?
9. What mistake did King Vittorio Immanuel make?
10. Why was he disowned by the Vastese?
11. Why was he considered "cocko"?
12. What values did the paesani of Vasto reflect?

1. What civilization do the Iliad and Odyssey represent?
2. What type of art are they?
3. What is the importance of their being mentioned here?
4. What relationship is being suggested by the mention of Iliad, Odyssey and Croatia?
5. Who bought the library?
6. Where was it?
7. What does this suggest about these people?
8. Why did they come together in winter?
9. Could all of these people read?
10. Was it necessary that they read?

11. What was the basis of their enjoyment even if they could not read?
12. What is significant about the mention of the newspaper?
13. What is significant about the mention of Tolstoy, Turgeniff and Dostoyevsky?
14. What is being said about the people in both Vasto and Croatia?
15. What is being said about mankind and art?

List the various arts and name some great American artist who has contributed to each.

Of what original nationality was he or from what national background did he come?

Name some foreign language newspapers we have in the United States. Why do we have them?

Do you have a library or museum in your town? How much is it used?

These quotations are from writers knowledgeable about regional life: Pietro di Donato in Three Circles of Light and Emily Balch, Our Slavic Fellow Citizens. Does your town or region and its people have a distinctive art, product, or culture. If so, study it by talking with its practitioners, writing up your results, and sharing them with your classmates.

Have you (your family or group) a special skill? What levels of skill are there in its development?

What is the videotape saying about a musical art form — and about the need man has for art in Louisiana, Vasto, and Croatia?

EMMA LAZARUS (1849-1887)

THE NEW COLOSSUS

[*Inscription for the Statue of Liberty, New York Harbor.*]

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

"The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus depicts an ideal of freedom, symbolized in America by the Statue of Liberty. The "yearning to breathe free," the "homeless, tempest-tossed" describe immigrant feelings. "The wretched refuse of

your teeming shore" conveys what impression to you about immigrant cultural, artistic, and democratic backgrounds and expectations? Compare this poem with the passages about the Vastese and the Croatians. Emma Lazarus describes immigrants from which point of view — American or foreign? What does this passage and the whole collage tell us about the observation: "We do not live in the past, the past lives in us."

VI

"Debate With the Rabbi"
Howard Nemerov

Many of the Rabbis who emigrated to the United States had great learning that went unrecognized by their contemporaries whose values began to change. These Rabbis sometimes eked out a meager living in sweat shop conditions and in their free time tried to teach religious and traditional values. But change affected even this endeavor revealed in the short poem, "Debate With the Rabbi" by Howard Nemerov.

There is a definiteness and finality in the first words of the Rabbi. The Rabbi knows what has happened to the individual to whom he is speaking. "You've lost your religion," is a horrendous statement when one considers the history and dignity of Judaism. The reply of the respondent is equally horrendous and extremely shocking. "It wasn't much to keep." Thousands of years of dedication to God, of discrimination and suffering on the part of the Jews are sluffed away in a derogatory reply. But the Rabbi is not to be put down. He says that one should not deny values which give a man a special dignity. He is asking the respondent to recognize an association with that part of any society which recognizes the spiritual dignity of man. The respondent coldly and arrogantly replies, "I feel no solidarity." What then is the nature of change, of the conflict in values?

The Rabbi becomes very specific. "We are the people. . ." implies we are the chosen people of God. This fact is revealed in "the Book." He is speaking about the law and revelation; he is speaking about the Torah which contains the law of Moses. He is speaking about the body of Civic and Canon Law of the Jews; he is speaking about the Talmud. He is speaking about the covenant of God with the Jews; he is speaking about the canonical books: the Law, the Prophets and

Hagiographa. He is speaking about the Old Testament. He is speaking about the most important and valuable documents which concern God's revealing himself to the Jews. But the word "Talmud" is Hebrew meaning "to learn." Therefore, the Rabbi is suggesting to his respondent that he knows the revelations of "the Book". The Rabbi is speaking of the work of God to man. The respondent suggests that man lives by mundane and utilitarian values: everyday commerce, professionalism, and only human associations. What contrast exists in the meaning of "book"?

Still the Rabbi will not give up. If you will not accept "the Book," at least accept our Jewish tradition and our history. Accept the traditions and history of your great, dedicated and, many times, suffering and discriminated against forefathers. But the respondent has even cut himself off from these vital sources of spiritual dignity. "But history is over," he replies. He does not need "the Book;" he does not need tradition; he does not need history. He needs no reminders of spiritual dignity. He is his own man; he has made a complete break.

The Rabbi, recognizing the respondent's position, reminds him of the contributions of the Jewish people to civilization. What he is suggesting here is that people who are God centered can and have made great contributions to their fellow men. "We Jews are creative people." The skeptic who will not accept religious values challenges him. "Make something then." Is there dishonesty in this response because he surely must know at least some of the creative contributions of the Jewish people to society or does the respondent want the Rabbi to create as well as narrate points of argument? The Rabbi, in his humility, still tries to reason with him. He cites some areas of human endeavor to which the Jew has contributed. The skeptic responds by playing on the Rabbi's words. "Fiddle and physic indeed, . . ." He is belittling the Rabbi's words concerning the contributions of his own people and he is doing it by means of an arrogant use of repetition. Yet, it seems that he knows in his heart that this is not true.

The Rabbi is now exasperated. The arrogance and pride of his respondent have topped this wise and humble man. The Rabbi calls him a "stubborn and stiff-necked man." Still trying, the Rabbi appeals paradoxically to the respondent's humility despite the fact that he recognizes that he is an obstinate person. "Instead of bowing down . . ./ You go on in your obstinacy." The respondent's

final statement is interesting. "We Jews are that way." It is abrupt; leaving the reader to feel that although the respondent rejects the Rabbi's appeals, he still identifies with Judaism. But does he have a changed and different concept of Judaism? "We Jews. . ." Why?

Does the debate between the Rabbi and his respondent represent changes in attitudes by members of other religions toward their clergy and the doctrinal, traditional, and historical values they represent?

Why do you think these changes regarding the religion of one's forefathers take place?

Is the "change" in the poem essential or superficial?

The debate is with a Rabbi, and the dialogue creates a tension between "obstinacy" and acceptance. If one tests the other, one may depend on the other. If so, how are both strengthened?

VI(2)

Illustrious Ancestors
Denise Levertov

The United States is composed of a population whose ancestry reflects virtually every civilization in any part of the world. This is a great but, in a sense, unrecognized asset despite the fact that some ethnic groups attempt to maintain and foster the traditions and culture of their forefathers. What a magnificent culture we would have if we made an attempt to assimilate and project the greatness of the cultures of all the ancestors of this great population.

This poem "Illustrious Ancestors" written by Denise Levertov in 1959 reflects this interest in the cultural roots of her ancestors. In this poem she tells us about the ancestors of her mother and father.

She begins by telling us about her father's side of the family. He descended from a Russian rabbi, "of Northern White Russia." She refers to him as "The Rav." Although she applies the name Rav to her father's ancestor, there was once a great Rav, which means teacher, in the early Jewish cultural tradition. His name was Abba, but he was also called Abba Arikka ("Abba the Tall") because of his tall stature. The Rav to whom the poetess is referring was

Schneuor Zaimon, a well known Hasid. The Hasid movement was a Jewish mystical movement of the eighteenth century. This group emphasized the importance of the events of each day rather than occasional outstanding occurrences. This Rav, Schneuor Zaimon, is supposed to have understood the speech of birds, "nevertheless/when he grew old it was found/he understood them anyway, having/listened well." We are told a third thing about him, namely, that he was a holy and ascetic man, "and as it is said, prayed/with the bench and the floor." So, we are informed that this Rav, Schneuor Zaimon, an ancestor of the poetess, came from Northern White Russia, that he was an eighteenth century Jewish Mystic and that he understood the speech of birds.

The poetess now turns to her mother's side of the family "as did/Angel Jones of Mold, whose meditations/were sewn into coats and britches." Mold is a town in Wales. We are also told that Angel Jones was a tailor and a mystic. Thus we are informed that on both sides of the poetess' family there were illustrious ancestors.

Now the poetess turns to herself, "I"; this gives us an opportunity to talk about her. Her father was Jewish who became a convert to Christianity. He emigrated to England where he became an Anglican priest. One of the great hopes of his life was to achieve the unity of Judaism and Christianity. The poetess was born in Essex in 1923, was educated at home and eventually she came to New York where she now lives.

In this small poem she recognized the importance of her ancestry "thinking some line taut between me and them." And she expresses the hope that her poetry will reflect their cultural gifts. Just as the Rav was supposed to understand what birds said, so too she would like her "poems direct as what the birds said." She, too, would like her poetry to reflect the mysticism and asceticism of the Rav and Angel Jones of Mold, "hard as a floor, sound as a bench" and "Mysterious as the silence when the tailor/would pause with his needle in the air." Yes, she does truly recognize the cultural gifts of her illustrious ancestors. But we, too, should recognize the cultural gifts that all those people who came as immigrants to the United States brought with them. Yes, there is "some line taut between (us) and them."

Each of our ancestors brought some cultural gift with them to the United States. What were some of the cultural gifts your ancestors brought with them? These gifts need not be sensational, they may have a magnificent simplicity about them.

If you have only a vague idea of your ancestry (or of another one you are more interested in but still vague about) you can set up an investigative project with your teacher, librarian and practitioner as resource guides. The practitioner would be the person in the field you are investigating. Select any object or practice in your environment (advertising, architectural style, candy making, a trade, hospital, sports stadium, etc.) By using standard references such as encyclopedias, history books, and specialized works search for the sources of your subject. You will most likely find several cultural origins which through cross-reference will reveal the many ancestors of our way of life. You may discover something about techniques of, for instance, masonry or dress design that are no longer practiced. What reasons explain this? Is what has been lost valuable? Could it still be used and enjoyed? The more closely you investigate your subject the more difficult it will be to find the absolute source: What does this tell you about the "present." What can an ancestry tell someone about himself or herself?

VI(3)

"Elegy", John Ciardi

There are those whose parents came to this land, having both memories and dreams. This elegy, a lyric memorial to the dead, is about one such person.

The father, changed from farmer in the "old country" to tailor, to insurance salesman. In those days movement from one job to another to achieve some sort of financial security was not uncommon. Note the use of metaphor: "logarithms," "ten-cent-a-week lives," "Tables . . ."

Notice that the insurance salesman was invited into the home of the customer, and that the dime meant a lot to his clients whose sacrifices kept up premium payments. The woman of the family handled the money which was scarce — or so the poet's emphasis upon "Mrs." leads us to believe.

"I will see you, Madam, next week. Give my regards, please, to your husband." In those days (and often today) people of the same ethnic group lived in the same locality of a town and maintained their old language and customs. They also did much business among themselves. Notice the personal relationship

between father and his customers. Notice how he calls his customer by her first name, Anna.

Why is this short conversation followed by the word "Debit"? The insurance salesman paid the dime out of his own pocket to protect his customer's policy and to collect the additionally owed dimes when the customers had them. The insurance salesmen knew their customers very well and this also meant knowing their financial status.

Notice the reference to "his ten year button." Father was evidently a success as a salesman. His savings fed his own dreams. He spilled "the dimes like mountain water into the moss of himself." Why? The words "moss" and "piney lots" indicate what facts.. Not some summer vacation activity, it was continual: "Sunday by Sunday. . . a patron of the seasons." He left his print on the earth.

"Perfection" suggests that father was doing what he wanted to do all his life. He was close to his good earth. "Useless" is an ironic use of words, why? His dream transformed this poor land into the fruitful productivity of his homeland. What about his homeland was also a dream?

Note the unities — Aida, land, dreams, cheese, wine. How are region, produce, and art related in your environment?

This is an interesting description of father who was a successful immigrant, but as successful as he was in his new land, one could not take the contributions of his native land out of him. Should one have? Suddenly, jolted into reality by the word "lie" we re-evaluate the word "dreamed". The poet experienced vicariously through his sister's memory. But the story about father had become part of the poet's imagination, "having dreamed it from all the nights I was growing." He had idealized father's life, "I have done nothing as perfect as I have dreamed him." Reinforcing this is his statement, "God knows what queer long darks I had no eyes for." "Darks" implies the possible deprivations, suffering and hardships that father, one immigrant among money, could have endured. But "I have no eyes for" suggests the poet's realization of the life of his father whose life in actual reality was not known to him. "Stairwell weeks" and "Sunday breezeways" suggest father's daily routine as an insurance salesman and the brief happiness he had on the "useless" lots. But father's life is all in the poet's imagination. What actually was father's life like? How is the poet's dream of his father like and unlike his father's dream?

Finally, as the poem concludes, the poet appears to universalize, "But I will swear the world is not well made that rips such gardens from the week." There is something wrong with a world that does not permit a man to achieve his dreams all seven days of the week, to achieve a complete fulfillment of his dreams. Or, on the other hand, should the poet have portrayed a life of suffering endured by father; " . . . a saint's way to the cross and nail by nail hymned out my life to glory." Why "for one good reason"? The poet is writing about father whom he loves and to whom he gives an ideal life and he is writing about every immigrant to this country. He is saying that father and these people were entitled to a better life; if not, then his poem should have been about the nature of suffering and hardship father and all others had to undergo. But he had idealized father's life. The poet is making a paradoxical statement in the poem. Which fact is the reality: The dream? The suffering? The suffering for the dream? The saint-like virtue of self-sacrifice irrespective of dream? How and why is the theme of father and child universally human and particularly American and ethnic?

VII

From The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics

Michael Novak

Places and things are objective reality to any person Memories, ambitions and dreams are subjective reality to any person. The immigrant came to a new land bringing not only his or her memories, ambitions and dreams but also personal abilities which helped this new land achieve a new greatness. We are the recipients of the American dream of our forefathers.

"What price is exacted by America when into its maw it sucks other cultures of the world and processes them? What do people have to lose before they can qualify as true Americans?"

1. How does the name "New Hope" reflect the aspirations of all immigrants?
2. What do we mean by "Nativist American"?
3. What is meant by "White Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture"?
4. What is meant by "an Irish Church"?
5. What price, if any, do you think is exacted of the immigrant by America?

6. What do the various colored stars symbolize?
7. Why was father proud of his youngest son?
8. Is there a justification to his being proud?
9. Is the statement, "Die for us and we'll give you a chance", fair?
10. What were some of the traditions kept by these people?
11. Are you familiar with any of these traditions?
12. How are nationality and religion confused by a move into the American suburbs?
13. Are we living the dream our grandparents dreamed?
14. Is it wise to give up one's native language?
15. What is being suggested by finding "that secret relief"?
16. Did our grandparents choose wisely for us?

How much do you know about democracy?

How much do you know about American democracy?

Is it pure democracy or are there limitations placed on it?

What in the Declaration of Independence clues us in on what is meant by the dignity of man?

Have you ever read it?

What does the Constitution of the United States say about the dignity of man?

What do we mean when we say "Constitution of the United States"?

Have you ever read it?

What are the Federalist Papers?

Have you ever read them?

Are the ideals stipulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution reflected in the dignity of the American citizen today?

How can we answer unless we know the sense of democracy and freedom each group had when they came or were brought here?

A GLASS ROSE

A one Act play based upon Richard Bankowsky's novel.

Cast

JOZEF, PYOTR	*Stanislaw's brothers-in-law*
STANISLAW MACHEK	*Son of Old Machek*
ROZALJA	*Stanislaw's wife and sister of Pyotr and Jozef*
OLD MACHEK	*Father of Stanislaw*
WORKMEN	
STELLA, MARYA	*Daughters of Stanislaw and Rozalja*
WILLIAM	*Stella's friend*

SCENE I

JOZEF I will drink to you, my friend, and then I will sleep the sleep of the of the dead. Tomorrow morning, I will throw you a flower, Stanislaw, and maybe a handful of earth, and try to remember again there in the garden when Pyotr would say:

PYOTR Hey, Stanislaw, what is it you do? They cannot work you very hard in the factory.
[*Stanislaw laughs.*]
Do you not know today is Sunday? You should be in church, Stanislaw. What kind of Catholic works on Sunday?

STANISLAW A Friend would not ask so many questions Pyotr, but bring a working man some beer.
But Truly, this is not work, my friends. After the factory, this is play, eh, Jozef?

JOZEF For a man like Pyotr, who sits in store all day and talks to women this is work, Stanislaw.

PYOTR A man who cleans his yard on Sunday instead of going to church is no Catholic.

STANISLAW But I am not cleaning my yard. And besides, I do not sleep like you, Pyotr. I was in church praying for your lazy soul while it was still lying in bed dreaming about the women you talk to all day.

PYOTR [*Laughs*], At least I do not work on Sunday.

STANISLAW But I am not working, I am playing. I am making myself a garden. I have the seed in the trunk and it would be a sin just to throw it out, and besides, a garden will be nice.

PYOTR Truly Rozalja, I would rather see your husband working on a Sunday than playing around with such foolishness.

ROZALJA Pyotr, my brother, why do you say these things. Those seeds of Stasiu will blossom like stars. Come have something to eat and drink.

PYOTR All right, and while we drink, let us sit on your porch and play some dominoes.

STANISLAW Dominoes? It will take me all day just to finish with these weeds. If I did not know better, I would think that the Hollanders were growing them, they are so thick.

PYOTR The Hollanders had better things to do than plant gardens, my friend. Besides, they said the town was going to the devil anyway with all us Polacks moving in from across the river, so why should they bother about weeds? They could not wait to move out. And you should be thankful, Stanislaw; how else do you think I could get you such a good bargain on such a fine house? Eh? Pah! But it is too hot even to watch somebody else work. Goodbye, Rozalja, Stanislaw. If you are serious about this foolish garden, then, I advise you to get yourself some new seed. After five years, that old seed is no good.

STANISLAW Five years! So, is it five years already Rozalja?

ROZALJA Yes, yes, it is. Marya is already four years old. Do you remember that day Stanislaw?

STANISLAW Ah, who could forget that day. The Old Country, Poland. The Village, the home of my father.

ROZALJA The home you were to leave forever but never forget. I remember very clearly that day myself, you were saying. . .

SCENE II

[*Transition to Poland, folk music. Stanislaw and Rozalja together near the home of Machek.*]

STANISLAW Father has given us a trunk filled with seeds — roses, lilies, tulips. I will have for you flowers all the year, Rozalja. Always they will blossom.

ROZALJA You seem a prince today, Stanislaw Machek; I hardly know my Stasiu. You spring from a soil richer than that under our feet.

STANISLAW In the other land we will find such a place, or we will make one.

ROZALJA To make a garden within a circle of children – ours, Pyotr's Jozef's. It will be like here. But have they a church for us in America? Will there be the wigilia at Christmas Eve?

STANISLAW Yes, we will make it so. And on St. Stephen's Day when the oats for the horses are blessed, we will throw handfuls at each other for luck. And on the Sunday before Easter we will swallow one bud of a pussy willow to heal our throats. . .

ROZALJA You must not say these things so. Ah, what of your father. Will Old [illegible]chek give us his blessings as my father has given us his?

STANISLAW My father cannot understand that we had a wedding but no reception. We need that money to get ship's passage, but he does not understand.

ROZALJA Come, let us try to speak with him again before we leave for America.

STANISLAW It is of no use, he will not give us his blessing.

ROZALJA Sh. . . be still.

STANISLAW He is talking.

ROZALJA But to whom?

OLD MACHEK The church was almost empty because why should anybody go to a wedding without a reception. Why would he want to leave?
Stanislaw was born here, on this land to leave now with only little Pawel to help care for it; yet, I cannot allow Stanislaw to leave without giving him something; I will not give him consent to go to America or my best wishes, and cannot even wish him luck; but [*speaking more distinctly*] a father must still be a father even if his son has ceased being a son.

A father must give his son something. He could take the house if he wished it, or the barn or even the cow if he would carry it. Only he must take something, seeds or bulbs, even. Ah, but such a son, what do you think? He says to me, "Tata, I want nothing only your good wishes, only that, nothing more." And so he would go without taking anything. Because he has stopped being a son, he would make me stop being a father.

[*Sound of Movement*]

PYOTR What happened before Rozalja and Stasiu left, Jozef?

JOZEF Rozalja kissed Old Machek, goodbye. [*Rozalja: "Goodbye, Tata".*] Stasiu placed his hand on his father's shoulder [*Stanislaw: "Bōg z wami, Tata".*] Machek did not move, except to point to the trunk. Pawel did not look up while sharpening his sickle with a stone. Rozalja tried to kiss Pawel but could not. [*Rozalja cries.*] Then it was time.

PYOTR Quiet, Jozef. . . we must speak to Rozalja and Stanislaw of better times to come.

[*Sound of wagon — moving continues. . .*]

PYOTR I will miss "old lady summer" with the webs covering all the trees, silver in the moonlight — and the violets — you can smell them everywhere in the spring. They say there is no "old lady summer" in America only very sickly violets with no smell and very few of them. But at least there will be no Austrians.

ROZALJA We must pray for Niemotka.

JOZEF Already half the young ones have left for America, with the papers forged by Old Niemotka. We will pass as the others have already. The young ones who have left, and are in America now, they must bless him.

PYOTR We are not going to serve no Austrian Army.

JOZEF We are not going to work all our lives for Austrians.

STANISLAW We go to America and get rich, eh Pyotr. Niemotka will be so happy.

PYOTR We have our Rozalja and her husband. We leave only a few hundred old friends who will be dead soon, anyway, and an old butcher shop in a town that is too small to make any real money in.

ROZALJA Old Machek, we leave him and we leave little Pawel. . .

JOZEF Do you think Old Machek was right? Do you know how much he wanted us to stay and fight?

STANISLAW I am afraid he will hurl a knife into the teeth of these bloodthirsty Austrians.

[*tempo slows. . .*]

PYOTR Pan Machek is not young anymore. He cannot be expected to understand the ways of the young.

STANISLAW Rozalja, do you think there is something in what my father said, that all this leaving for America is useless.

ROZALJA God only knows, Stasiu.

STANISLAW Machek said it will be no different there. You run from the foreigners who live among us and go to live among foreigners. At least here it is they who are the foreigners, the intruders.

[*Old Machek: voice over*]

At least here what you have, though it is not much, it is at least yours. In America, nothing will be yours. You will lose even that which you take away with you — lose yourselves, and what is worse, your children.

ROZALJA Please, Stasiu.

[*Sensation of moving now a ship*]

PYOTR Look you can see it now! Look there!

[*Image of the Statue of Liberty. Outline of New York; Ellis Island.*]

SCENE III

[Returns to garden of SCENE I, except garden is now more of a garden.]

PYOTR People ask me, "Pyotr, what is your brother-in-law Stanislaw raising in that garden, manure or roses?" Which is it Stanislaw? Truly, I cannot decide which is worse, playing dominoes across the street in front of my store and being eaten alive by flies around the empty soda cases, or playing here and being poisoned by the stink from your manure garden.

STANISLAW You misplace a number. It is too bad your eyes are not as sharp as your nose, Pan Pyotr.

PYOTR Oh, forgive me gentlemen, the stink makes my eyes water so, I can hardly see to play correctly. Surely, Stanislaw, this garden of yours is a joke. You should write to your old father, and ask him how to plant a garden that smells like a garden. You can bet he has some flower garden this summer. He probably has nothing to eat, but you can bet he has some garden.

ROZALJA We will see, eh, Pyotr.

PYOTR Yes, Rozalja here is a letter from Poland.

ROZALJA Read it to us, then. . .

PYOTR No. I have not yet opened it from this morning. Last night I dream of blood and rushing water.

STANISLAW Since when is Pyotr, the butcher, afraid of dreams like that?

JOZEF I will read it.

PYOTR Pah, you had better tend your chickens than to read this letter. You read it Rozalja.

ROZALJA Let me see here. [*takes letter*] It says that Old Niemotka was arrested and held in the stockade.

STANISLAW Who says?

ROZALJA Lipinski says.

JOZEF Oh, Lipinski, yes, he went back to Poland because in America he could think of nothing but going back, and once he was back in Poland could think of nothing but coming back to America.

Stanislaw Now that's Lipinski.

PYOTR Jozef, the smell of the coops has possessed you.

ROZALJA The Austrians finally caught poor Niemotka. But, uh. . [*continues reading*]. . .When Pawel came home on leave from the border, he and the Count Resniski. . .

STANISLAW Yes, Old Count Resniski. I drove his carriage as well as Apollo drives the sun, the Count would say.

ROZALJA . . . and Old Machek went riding in the Count's broken-down carriage with the sagging horse, up to the stockade in the middle of night. They broke into the stockade, killed the sentries, and got Old Niemotka out into the carriage.

JOZEF
Dzieki Boze.

ROZALJA [*Continues*] Even before the soldiers could get into their trousers, they were riding away with Pawel using the ship. It was too much for the horse. It dropped dead before they could even get more than a hundred yards from the gate. The carriage turned over and the old ones rolled out with their pitchforks and sickles, and Pawel shooting at the on-coming soldiers. Old Machek and Niemotka were shouting and swinging

their sickles and pitchforks. The soldiers shot them dead. [*Stanislaw:* "Bože, Bože."] They lay bleeding in the street with a couple of soldiers lying bloody beside them.

PYOTR Machek dead.

SCENE IV

[*Slides of a factory — workmen on lunch break.*]

JOZEF What is that Stanislaw?

STANISLAW By golly, my Rozalja plays jokes on her husband. A rose in my lunch pail — why, it is almost indecent. [*Others laugh and joke. . . pretend to faint from fragrance.*
"How romantic is Stanislaw."]

WORKMAN Truly, this Stanislaw must have made his Rozalja very happy if she sends him a rose this morning. [*One fills a soda bottle and places rose in it; others joke about working in a garden or a factory.*]
[*Slides showing passing of time — scene returns to factory. No more rose in soda bottle.*]

JOZEF [*Speaking to a workman*] After Stella was born, Rozalja is not herself. Stanislaw is. . .

WORKMAN Stanislaw is a big shot foreman with a white shirt and no lunch pail, thinks he is a boss or something, going against his own people.

STANISLAW [*Stands*] Quiet, my friends, Quiet!

JOZEF I am sure that most of us who work in the same department with Stanislaw understand how he feels about his job, what with two daughters and a helpless wife.

YOUNG WORKMAN What? Two daughters and a wife! Bruschek here has four daughters and a wife.

JOZEF I know none of us likes to see Stanislaw not go out on strike with us. But surely we can understand. A man must do what he believes is right. Has he not always been a good foreman?

YOUNG WORKMAN He's just a scab, that's what he is.

STANISLAW [*Turning to Jozef*] Scab, Jozef?

JOZEF It means you continue to work during a strike, that is all, Stanislaw.

STANISLAW No, I have a garden, Jozef. I know what a scab is in a garden.

JOZEF No, Stanislaw, he does not mean that. Only that you work during the strike.

YOUNG WORKMAN Yes, scab, that's what I said. What's the matter don't you understand English?

[*Workman leaves*]

[*Stanislaw grasps a fallen soda bottle and as he speaks slowly places it upright.*]

STANISLAW Damn fool. Damn young fool.

JOZEF The young ones are looking for a reason to get even with you anyway because they don't like to be bossed by a man who can't speak English right, who makes them work for their money. I know I am hurting you, Stanislaw, by telling you this. But it is the way they think. They are young and have hot heads. They do not like your white shirt and your eating in the cafeteria like a boss or something. And I am not one to say they are completely wrong, because now that they have all gone, just between you and me, Stanislaw, you should not desert your old friends like this. The money is not worth it.

STANISLAW It is not so much the money, Jozef. The money is important, of course; but it is not only that. It is the job itself, Jozef. As you said, my friend, I cannot even speak English hardly and still I am a foreman. It is something to be foreman, Jozef. It is something. . . like I used to drive the horses for Count Resniski, do you remember? It is not that I like to boss the men. Not that. Have I ever bossed any of you, Jozef? Maybe the young ones once in a while who do not want to work anyway, who get paid for nothing while the rest of you work like horses. The young ones who even start these strikes because they are not getting paid enough to do nothing. But this striking will not help, Jozef. It will only mean blood and violence, and when the blood has sunk into the earth and it is all over, no one can say that you or the others will be any better off. Still, when you and the rest go out, Jozef, if you are lucky enough to be one of those who does not get hurt (because many will be hurt, Jozef, and maybe even die), even if you accomplish nothing and the strike is broken, you will at least have your old jobs back. But if Stanislaw goes out with you — a foreman, a company man — he will not even have a job when it is all over. He will no longer be a foreman; he will not even have a job.

[*Fade out.*]

SCENE V

JOZEF Pyotr, they stone the house of Stanislaw, Come! [*Marya, Stella, (daughters of Stanislaw) and Rozalja screaming. Sound a broken windows.*]

STANISLAW Stella, Marya, go to your mother. She is cut by the glass.

VOICE OF SNEERING MAN Ho, Pan Stanislaw! You had better work hard this week. New windows will cost something. What kind of big shot foreman lives in a house with no windows?

STELLA Tata, who said that?

[*Sound of entering.*]

MARYA Uncle Jozef, Pyotr. Father is inside.

JOZEF We have talked it over, Stanislaw. And we know that you are right. That if you go out, you will surely lose not only foreman but even a place at a machine. So we have decided that it would only be right if we all put our savings together and loan them to you so you can open up some kind of business — maybe a butcher store like Pyotr. We will see to it that every man who lives in the town and works in the factory will buy in your store, Stanislaw; and soon you will be richer than Pyotr even and maybe even force him out of business.
[*Pyotr and Jozef laugh.*]

PYOTR [*Becoming serious*] Maybe a flower store. We could get enough money together to start it, and you could pay us back when you begin to make money. And it would not be long, because we will see to it that there is not a wedding or a funeral in the town that does not buy the flowers from Stanislaw's store. What do you say — my friend? Be reasonable. Think of Rozalja! Of the girls!

STANISLAW Stanislaw will continue to work, no matter what. You break my windows. . . My greenhouse has not a single pane of glass left. I do not know how I will be able to grow even a single flower this winter. But that is all right, that is nothing. But look at my wife, my Rozalja, whom you say I must think of she is in bandages. Who has done this? Now you come, offering Stanislaw charity, you come and say, "Ho, we are doing you a big favor, Stanislaw. We should not even be here talking to a scab." Well, maybe Stanislaw is nothing but a scab. But he does not need charity from anyone. Not from you or anyone. Stanislaw will continue to work. no matter what!

JOZEF Truly, Stanislaw, I am sorry. We are, all of us, sorry.

PYOTR I am sorry, Stasiu.
[*They leave. Slight sound of glass breaking.*]

SCENE VI

[*Slides of picketing – time passing.*]

MARYA Come, Stella, let us fetch Tata from work.

STELLA But, the strike, the others do not work.

MARYA He still works.

[*Sounds of walking.*]

MAN'S VOICE The police truck takes away the scabs. Now that the scabs are gone, nothing will happen.

STELLA I hope Tata was in the truck.

MARYA Of course he was. Even he's not that stupid. Come on! You and your dreams!

YOUNG WORKMAN'S VOICE Well look who's there! Pan Stasiu, how is it you weren't in the truck with the rest of the scabs?

MARYA Oh, God! No! Not even he could be that foolish!

STELLA Look, the boss offers Tata a ride home in his limousine, and he points here.

MARYA He sees us here. He's coming towards us. No, oh no.

VOICE OF YOUNG WORKMAN Machek's even too much of a big shot to ride with the bosses. Maybe he's even higher than the bosses. Maybe they've promoted him so high for deserting his own people. Three cheers for Stanislaw, the boss of bosses.

[*Cheering and laughing*]

What's the matter, Stanislaw? Why don't you laugh? Don't you think I'm funny? Come on, cheer up, my friend. Would you like us to ride you home on our shoulders? It's the least we can do. After all, this is the first time any one of us have ever become a boss. What do you say,

my friends, shall we ride him on our shoulders?

STELLA Oh, Marya, they will kill him.
[*Stella screams*]
[*Sounds of stones like hail. Stanislaw moaning.*]
MARYA Let them.
[*Scenes of fallen Stanislaw, then of time passing.*]

SCENE VII

STANISLAW Enough, woman! Stanislaw has had enough.

ROZALJA [*Sound of a rocking chair*] Do not warn me, husband. You do not frighten me. Why did you do it? Your garden, Stanislaw, what does a drunkard who can take an ax to his garden, what does he care?

STANISLAW You are not a woman. You are a witch.

ROZALJA And you a Dyabel! Yes!

STANISLAW Do not talk so. . .

ROZALJA You are bold, willful. . .

STANISLAW Woman, we had here much that was good. Do not forget that. It was not I who made the destruction.

ROZALJA Yes, it is you. Ever since your father would not give us his blessings. We are under a, a curse.
[*Sound of Stella entering.*]
STELLA Tata, what has happed to the garden —

ROZALJA Stella, go back to bed.

STANISLAW Stella, you were at the strike. You saw what happened. Why did you not leave with Marya?

STELLA I fainted, I fainted — I did not see!

STANISLAW You, you will see it all!

ROZALJA What happened then at the strike?

STANISLAW Do you know even one little bit of it? . . . when she came to get me . . .when they threw the stones at me like some animal . . .do you know what my Marya did? No, you do not know nothing.

ROZALJA Stella, go back to bed.

STANISLAW TO ROZALJA Where is the cradle with Stanislaw's son? It is too late, eh? Too late. Do you think your husband is mad? A hundred gardens . . . [*He swings and the roses fall over the floor, glass breaking!*]

STELLA I cannot stay here. [*Rushes away.*]

ROZALJA Stella, Stella, where can you go?

SCENE VIII

JOZEF Pyotr, still no one knows where Stella has gone?

PYOTR These young ones! They do not return: even in the spring. What of Stanislaw, Jozef, after so many months, are they to make him foreman?

JOZEF No, no he comes in his old white shirt, but he is a workman, only. He is strange, Pyotr, he is sick with drink. His hands shake; he mumbles: "All gone, you will lose your children. Wife. . .Daughters. . . Garden, Gone, all Gone.

[*Sound of machine.*]
[*Slides of men at machine.*]
[*Factory whistle.*]
JOZEF Oh, my God, he fell headfirst in the machine. The power. . .
[*Slide of man lying – pool of blood – glass rose, lunch bucket open on floor.*]

SCENE IX
Casket
[*Rosary begins.*]

PYOTR [*Aside*] Yes, ten months after the strike Stanislaw falls into his machine: no more. And Rozalja, my poor sister tomorrow after the funeral they will probably not even ask Rozalja to get out of her rocking chair. They will probably carry her, rocker and all, out to the car or ambulance or whatever and drive her out to the sanatorium still rocking and with a bowl of glass roses. Yes, Pyotr, by this time tomorrow it will have been all over for a good many hours. And Jozef will have cleaned out the coops as usual. It will mean something from the eggs every morning besides the thirty-five dollars from the new tenants (all right, thirty, if they do not mind living without a porch) and with the hundred from Stella to wait 'til she arrived from New York. . . And the seven hundred from the Polish Union will be of no use to Rozalja in the sanatorium, besides, it is better for her brother to manage it. Yes, it has been a very good day, Pyotr, a good Friday, a very good Friday. And tomorrow should be a good day too, since the neighbors will buy from me all the more after they see what a fine reception I give for my brother-in-law after the funeral. And in one or two more Sundays I will be able to put on my black homburg hat and my white scarf and gray spats and gloves and go walking in the Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue with all the other big shots. Of course, there is nothing like a garden. Ah, it was nice just to sit there on Sundays in Stanislaw's garden. Maybe he was a fool, but you will have to admit that his garden was really something. Who would ever have thought in that first year that it would

become such a beautiful thing — more manure than anything else? Yes, you will miss it, Pyotr. Why, it will hardly seem like summer at all. And you will miss him, too. Poor Stanislaw. Despite everything no one can say I did not love him like a brother. Ah, Pyotr, when will you learn that it is foolish to be so sentimental? Where does it get you? What does it bring you? [*Sounds of steps.*]

MARYA Who is that, Stella?

STELLA It is my William.
Uhh. How is Ciocia Lottie, Marya. I did not even know you left Tata's house.

MARYA I left only a little before you did, Stella. Tata would be so proud of you now Stella.

STELLA As he was of you, Marya, remember.
[*Slides of casket. Sounds of people.*]
JOZEF Yes, they have done a good job with your face, old one. This young undertaker knows his business; he has made you look quite well, Stanislaw, quite fine. He does good work, and he is very helpful and respectful for such a young fellow. It is not even his job to be here, to sit here through the saying of the rosary. He has done much to make it easier for your daughters, and for Rozalja too — though there is little anyone can do for Rozalja. It is all very easy for her now, Stanislaw; no need to worry about her. She smiles at everything. She weeps too, yes; but when you talk to her, she smiles and smiles and gives you the bowl of flowers to smell like they were real. She will be all right. They will all be all right, Stanislaw. Only . . . I do not know about Stella. She did not cry at all. Perhaps, if she cried, it would be better [*voice becomes more direct*] Stella, Stella. Come over here. [*Sound of steps approaching*] Tell me Stella how are you. I am your godfather, remember . . . you left home so suddenly. . .

STELLA I am well enough now, Uncle Jozef. Do not worry about me. . . Do you think these flowers bright enough for a remembrance?

JOZEF Yes, yes, you must have sent an acre of blossoms. Your father when he was alive made us feel always as if it was in summer.

STELLA You should sit, Uncle; you seem tired. Let me call my William to fetch you something.

JOZEF No, no, I am all right. This William you are with, he comes from the city, too? You are married?

STELLA No, no wedding.

[*Sound of steps approaching*]

WILLIAM Is there anything I can do, sir? Stella, is there anything?

STELLA No, nothing. I am grateful, Uncle, that you waited until I arrived from New York to make the funeral arrangements.

JOZEF It was Pyotr. . .

STELLA [*Coldly*] Yes, I know.

JOZEF We saw you, Pyotr and I, when you drove up. Such a big car you have and such a horn that makes music.

WILLIAM Yes, Stella likes it.

STELLA Uncle, we will return soon to the viewing. Let us go, William.

JOZEF Whoever thought little Stella would grow up to live in a place like New York? Such a big unbelievable place. Remember when we first saw it, Stanislaw? Standing there at the rail, the four of us waiting with all the others to get our first look at it, Rozalja's shawl blowing in the morning cold, the white gulls screaming and hanging in the air around the boat and falling and slanting and screeching so loud that Pyotr had to say it twice, "Look, you can see it now! Look there!" pointing, and through the cold haze the statue standing on the water and later the points of the buildings and all of it so big and

unbelievable, and all the shouting and singing all over the boat, and Pyotr with tears in his eyes and wiping his nose in his sleeve, and everybody so happy — until we got there. You would think that by this time some of us would begin to understand it, eh, my friend? I will drink to you, my friend, and then I will sleep and sleep of the dead. Tomorrow morning, I will throw a rose into your grave and maybe a handful of earth, and try to remember again how it was in the beginning. . . IS NOW AND EVER SHALL BE, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN.

[*Conclusion of the Rosary*]

THE END

A GLASS ROSE

Study Guide

A GLASS ROSE

Suggested Study Questions and Commentary

A Glass Rose is the title of a novel published in 1958, the first of a since completed tetralogy, by Richard Bankowsky. Born in Wallington, New Jersey in 1928, he was educated at Yale and Columbia and has taught at several universities. Although the novel and play adaptation concern the decline of a Polish immigrant family, the story could be about any American group. The play takes place partly in Poland and mainly in an ethnic neighborhood near the industrial section of an American city. As more is known about the Old, the New World, becomes more real. The journey of the play parallels in some ways the much desired journey we all take into a brave new world.

Scene I

Is there importance to the fact that the setting to Scene I is a rose garden? Is there a contrast being suggested between rose garden and factory? What type of working conditions existed for factory workers in the 1920's and 1930's? That Pyotr is the proprietor of his own store gives him status in his neighborhood. Why? Is Pyotr talking down to Stanislaw? Why is it important to Stanislaw to plant the seed that is in the trunk? Is there a significance to Pyotr's statement, "Polacks moving in from across the river"?

Scene II

Stanislaw and Rozalja plan to emigrate to America. Rozalja wants to carry on the wigilia dinner which began after the first star of Christmas Eve was sighted. Many families fasted from food until the dinner. The menu varied but often featured barszcz (clear beet soup), pickled herring, sauerkraut, pierogi (a type of dumpling), . . . Why would Rozalja want to know if they would continue this dinner in America -- a practice that many Polish Americans practice? Throwing oats on St. Stephen's Day combined both Christian and pagan customs: striking reenacted the martyrdom of St. Stephen; the kernels signified fertility and growth. Swallowing a pussy willow bud (blessed on the Sunday before Easter) assured protection from sore throat. Pussy willows were used in Central and Northern Europe rather than palms during the

Palm Sunday. (Although a non-believing person might regard these customs as merely superstitious — as Stanislaw may — many Americans spend billions each year for cosmetics and drugs which experts have found worthless.) Does Stanislaw regard these customs as somewhat humorous, as indicated by Rozalja's response? It should be remembered that the Polish are a very religious people who during decades of foreign occupation retained their faith integral with their national identity.

Stanislaw's personality begins to emerge in this scene reenacting the time before emigration. What do you interpret by his comment, "We will make it so." The belief that parents represent God in the rearing of children may help to explain why Stanislaw and Rozalja want to have his father, Old Machek, give them his blessing. Old Machek does in a sense give his assent with the giving of flower seeds, for Stanislaw must "take something". He must still be a father. Why? Since the family and land were so vital to peasant life the wedding ceremony and reception were great matters of village life lasting for many days. Family and land carried on the great traditions of dignity and independence, if there were land and children enough to work the farm; care for each other, especially the aged; perpetuate the cycle of church and festival; and in sum, live a worthy life. Seen in this way, why cannot Old Machek give his blessings? How then do you interpret the leave taking?

Notice the changing rhythm in this scene. How relieved they are at first to leave Poland; yet, all of them must wonder what will happen to them in America. How does each anticipate his or her future?

Stanislaw remembers his father's words not as a curse so much as a logical prediction. Do you believe Machek has any reason for making that prediction?

During the time of the early scenes in this play, Poland had been partitioned and about to be dominated again by Prussia (Germany), Russia, and Austria-Hungary. The latter power was most liberal with the Polish people under their control. The young men, Stanislaw, Jozef, and Pyotr, may have seen increased Austrian domination because of impending World War I. The great powers pressed Polish young men to serve in their armies. Pawel would be forced to serve in the Austrian army. Those who emigrated obviously saw no future in a foreign-dominated society.

Scene III

What does the conversation in this scene reveal about the changing relationship between Pyotr and Stanislaw? For all we know, Pyotr may or may not have opened the letter sent to him by Old Lipinski. Lipinski evidently wanted to have someone in America tell Stanislaw what happened, rather than to have Stanislaw read in a letter of his father's death. Pyotr wanted Rozalja or someone other than himself to tell Stanislaw, and so he may have used the excuse of the dream. ESP and dream interpretation are nothing new, of course; each peasant group including the Poles had their own code of dream revelation. Even if Pyotr is lying about the dream, he probably knows that the others, with the possible exception of Stanislaw, will respect his concern.

At first, they all enjoy the letter. Lipinski never could quite decide which country he loved more, America or Poland. Stanislaw's fond memory of Count Resniski could mean many things: the count who was "somebody" recognized the young Stanislaw's ability with horses. The count was most likely a peasant aristocrat made landless by Austrian occupation.

The assault upon the stockade seems foolhardy. Yet many people including the Poles have resisted invaders. Old Machek must have agonized over the decision to free Niemotka, the man who forged his son's papers. Perhaps it was a matter of principle to attack the intruders. Anyway, he and Pawel had less to lose since the emigration of Stanislaw, and the Austrian occupation.

Students may want to study how a native people resist foreigners in peaceful and violent ways: in America at the turn of the century; in Poland during the World War II occupation; in the struggle for women's rights . . . Michael Novak in The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics discusses the contributions of ethnic groups in the fighting during World War II. For an excellent study of American nativism see John Higham's Strangers in the Land, 1860-1925.

Scene IV

What is significant about Stanislaw finding a rose in his lunch pail? Can one decide, thus, about the image in a factory of a rose in the soda bottle? Is there symbolism in the fact that eventually there is no rose in the soda bottle? Does the workman's statement concerning Stanislaw's success reveal Stanislaw's status among his people? What does Jozef's statement about "scab" and "strike" reveal about unions? Are the participants in the scene pictured as becoming

more American? "Speaking English properly", "the young ones", "old friends" and "strike" are significant words in the final conversation between Jozef and Stanislaw. Why? Stanislaw believes he has achieved something more important than monetary success. How has this sense of himself developed from his past life in Poland?

The shift of tone in this scene reflects the abrupt change in the lives of immigrants. Until the late 1930's, only minor industrial and governmental assistance existed for the unemployed, the sick, and the needy. Most people, of course, did not want charity. Immigrants expected to work hard and steadily at a job, help each other in time of need, and maintain their strong religious beliefs and customs.

While in this scene we see Stanislaw trying to keep his own sense of values, we also see him caught between the older way urged by Jozef and the new way expressed by the young workman. By improving his position as foreman Stanislaw has achieved "something." A foreman during this period rose through the ranks by persistence and knowledge he gained himself. He usually had not the benefit of much formal schooling. Yet, the younger ones envy him his position, and the older ones, who may understand him, nonetheless want his support during the strike. Thus, the young ones call him a "scab" — one who works when there is a strike. The older ones believe he has betrayed his own people.

Does Stanislaw in his final speech to Jozef articulate his position reasonably? Consider how Stanislaw has to choose among his achievement, his friends and relatives, and the changes brought forward by the young ones.

Scene V

Stanislaw realizes that his neighbors and coworkers, believing him a traitor, will attack him and even his greenhouse, home, and family. Stanislaw must wonder whether or not he has escaped the conditions of Poland under foreign occupation. The offer of Pyotr and Jozef seems generous, but Stanislaw refuses. Why? Is he "reasonable" especially now after what has happened. We see Stanislaw in his pride and indignation at his brothers'-in-law offer of charity. How to his mind is Stanislaw justified. Is he like his father? In what ways?

Scene VI

Stanislaw does not leave with the boss, perhaps because he sees his daughters and wants to take them home. Even if he had not seen them he may not have gone with the bosses. Your interpretation depends upon your respect for Stanislaw's position. Certainly he is not one to leave with the scabs.

Marya is so caught up in the action that she may have participated in the scourging of Stanislaw. Or she may feel disloyalty because he seems unreasonable and a traitor to his fellow workers. She may not understand how he can persist in working despite the stoning of their house and the unjuries to her mother, and the probable injury he will bring upon himself. Still, she is concerned enough to take Stella and bring tata home from work. Consider your reaction to Marya in this scene.

Is Marya at all like her father? Many children of immigrants felt ashamed of their parents' "strange" ways of speaking and acting. Although most were respectful, they felt torn between their love for their parents and their pressures to become American — or like their young friends who spoke English, enjoyed fashionable clothes and entertainment, and looked forward to "better" jobs. The pressures to conform were especially hard on the second generation. You might better understand these feelings by remembering those times when your friends regarded you as "different" or "odd" — for no good reason. Marya's actions are very serious in this scene because she has to confront her strongest feelings for and against her father.

Scene VII

Stanislaw completes the destruction upon his garden the others began. Rosalja cannot understand Stanislaw nor can be actually tell her all that has happened. They do not see each other as human, but as "witch" and "dyabel". Why? Since his wife and daughters cannot understand all that has happened, perhaps he believes a son could. He may also want a son to carry on the family name — a justification for his own life. Stella cannot stay. Rozalja cannot know "even one little bit of it". How do you take in what leads Stanislaw and his family to this?

Scene VIII

This scene may best be understood in terms of the others. For instance, juxtapose Scene III with this one.

Scene IX

We hear Pyotr musing to himself before the casket of Stanislaw. What does Pyotr's statement reveal about himself? Does he represent the attitude and achievement of success he sought in America? Pyotr, the dominoe player, calculates about people and money (rents, insurance from the Polish Union, his reputation before others, etc.) You might investigate why ethnic and business groups have started so many fraternal organizations and clubs in America.

Pyotr's references to Good Friday and Easter Sunday echo what ironic meanings?

Before the rosary begins Marya and Stella question each other in the way sisters usually do. We learn that Marya left home to live with her aunt (Ciocia) in Pennsylvania. What do the sisters imply about each other by references to tata's pride in them? The rosary begins. (The "rosary", derived from the Latin rosarium, rose garden, is a Roman Catholic meditation on five sacred mysteries with recitation of five decades of Hail Marys, each beginning with an Our Father and ending with a Gloria.)

Jozef reflects as the people say the rosary for the soul of Stanislaw. Jozef's concern for Stanislaw takes what form? Why is he especially concerned about Stella? Consider the lives of Stanislaw and his daughters concerning respect for parents, marriage, success. Jozef's closing returns us to the beginning How does this cycle distinguish the life of each character in America or from Poland to America? What is the significance of Jozef's words – "until we got there"?

Consider finally, the symbol of the rose in the play. See the rose as a musical progression with varying shades and changes of sense and meaning. The dominant theme of the rose is counterpointed by other images of machine sounds, Jozef's pigeons, the rosary, glass and glass breaking, the car horn, . . .

Conclusion

Several of the themes in this play appear in Philadelphia, Here I Come! and in First Person Dreams. Even the characters seem to have similar insights and aspirations. Old Machek and S. B. O'Donnell offer their sons

wisdom and love, yet the manner confuses their children. Although America symbolizes a new start in the early 1900's as well as in the 1960's, what changes have occurred in the dreams Gar O'Donnell and Stanislaw Machek have of America? What of their dreams of success? Stanislaw reaches his goal. He was foreman, home owner, family man. Gar's anticipation of America even though he has never been there reveals much about the America seen in films and described by his Aunt Lizzy. What images of America do the characters have and what do these tell us about them? Our interpretations often tell us more about ourselves than we realize. Reconsider the plays in terms of specific segments in First Person Dreams.

Study Materials for

Brian Friel's PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!

Introduction

Brian Friel uses several dramatic techniques which might need careful explanation. Most obvious is his use of Public Gar and Private Gar to develop a richer understanding of his main character. As he states:

> The two Gars, Public Gar and Private Gar, are two views of the one man. Public Gar is the Gar that people see, talk to, talk about. Private Gar is the unseen man, the man within, the conscience, the alter ego, the secret thoughts, the id. Private Gar, the spirit, is invisible to everybody, always. Nobody except Public Gar hears him talk. But even Public Gar, although he talks to Private Gar occasionally, never sees him and never looks at him. One cannot look at one's alter ego.

Students need to analyze the differences between Public Gar and Private Gar, for such an analysis leads to a deeper understanding of human motivation. This well might lead into a discussion of how all human beings have both a public and private side.

In addition, while Friel uses the traditional box set of realistic drama, he employs expressionistic and cinematic techniques. The memory sequences — particularly the love scenes between Gar and Kate in Episode I and the dream sequence which opens Episode II — are expressionistic; his use of insert scenes with little character development and with memory flashbacks is cinematic. Moreover, there are several references to film throughout the play.

Music is also used to heighten mood and to develop character. Note that Gar's favorite music is highly romantic.

The comedy of the play is Chekhovian, arising out of the characters as they confront their own lives. The humor is robust, even earthy; but it is a humor which brings tears as well as laughter. For example, we can laugh at the antics of Aunt Lizzie — that loud, brash, vulgar, frigid, lonely woman — but we are also moved by her desire for love. The hilarity of the scene with The Boys approaches the bawdy but it also attempts to hide the loneliness and emptiness of their lives.

If as Walter Kerr says this is a play about love and the communication of love but that while the word is "on the tip of every man's tongue and everlastingly not spoken," notice how the blocking of the characters in the performance reinforces this idea. The director always used spatial distance to isolate characters. Note particularly the scenes between Gar and S.B.; the scene with The Boys; the Rosary scene. How many characters in the play

touch or embrace? What are Gar's reactions to his being embraced by Master Boyle and by Aunt Lizzie?

Students should be alerted to the particular stage devices which develop mood, and meaning. How effective is the setting and the decor? What do these tell us about the characters? For example, what does the fact that Gar uses a wash basin in his bedroom tell us about the house? Is the fact that the Doogan's have a television important? How does the lighting help to emphasize the feeling at the end of each episode?

Students might find it interesting and helpful to act out several of the insert scenes. Of course, they should try to develop their own interpretations of the characters.

Play Synopsis

Episode I

Gareth O'Donnell is spending his last night in Ballybeg, Co. Donegal, Ireland. Tomorrow he leaves for a new life in America, in Philadelphia where he will be staying with his Aunt Lizzie, his dead mother's sister. He is daydreaming when Madge, the housekeeper enters and they talk about the reactions of Gar's father, County Councillor S.B. O'Donnell, to his son's leaving. The father enters, checks on matters relating to the shop, leaves, and Gar returns to his daydreams. Wild Irish music brings thoughts of his former love, Katie Doogan, now Mrs. Francis King. In a memory sequence, Gar relives the night when he and Katie broke off their relationship.

Madge comes in to announce tea. At tea the father and son barely speak except to mouth phrases which have been said over and over. Gar's old teacher, Master Boyle, enters and S.B. leaves. The conversation between Boyle and Gar brings back memories that Boyle had been in love with Mary, Gar's mother before she married S.B. Boyle gives Gar a book of poems written by the teacher, borrows money for a drink, and, in a moment of fatherly love, embraces Gar. Boyle rushes from the house, Madge enters, and Gar retreats to his bedroom, confused and uncertain, but at the end bravely singing "Philadelphia, Here I Come!"

Episode II

As the scene opens, Gar is in bedroom dreaming about his lost love, Katie. To break off the reverie, he daydreams of his exploits in America. When he reads the letter from Aunt Lizzie detailing his arrival in Philadelphia and describing his job, he thinks back to her visit to Ireland on September 8, the day of Katie's wedding to Francis King. Lizzie, her husband Con, and their American friend Ben Burton, have just returned from a trip to Bailtefree, the Gallagher homestead. They have had a few drinks along the way. In her tipsy state, Lizzie begs Gar to come to America to live with them. Confused and embarrassed, Gar accepts the invitation.

Following this memory sequence, Gar goes out to say goodby to his friends, the Boys. He is gone just a few minutes when the group returns. The boys are loud and blustery and drink freely. They tell of past exploits which we discover never really happened, particularly the exploits with women. They leave for another adventure saying confused and embarrassed farewells to Gar.

After they leave there is a knock on the door and Katie Doogan King enters to say goodby. Gar's comments to her are cruel and cynical. She leaves and as the curtain falls, Gar calls out for his father to say something.

Episode III

Part I

While the family rosary is being recited, Gar daydreams of a past day when he and his father went rowing on Lough na Cloc Cor and were happy. When the rosary is finished, they eat supper only to be interrupted by the parish priest, Canon Mike O'Bryne, who has come for his nightly game of draughts or checkers. The conversation between the Canon and S.B. is the same tonight as it has been for years. While the Canon and S.B. play, Gar daydreams and pleads for openness and communication, While Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto plays, Gar-Private cries out "To hell with all silent men!"

Part II

It is the small hours of the morning. Gar can't sleep and gets up to take some aspirin. He meets S.B. and they talk but it's all about business. Finally, Gar brings up the fishing trip to Lough na Cloc Cor, but S.B. doesn't remember it as Gar does. Gar leaves and Madge enters. They talk about Gar when he was a young boy. S.B. has loving memories of his son which he cannot communicate to Gar. Gar comes in, says goodnight to Madge and returns to his bedroom. His inner voice still asks "Why do you have to leave?" Gar can say only "I don't know. I - I - I don't know."

Discussion Questions

Episode I

1. Setting is very important in this play. What do the stage directions tell you about the setting? How do you visualize it? Pick out examples of the influence of the house setting and the town on the characters.
2. What is Gar's mood as the play opens? What lines indicate his mood?
3. Why do you think Gar spends so much of his time daydreaming? Do you think he has done this in the past or is it that he is leaving home tomorrow?
4. Pay attention to the reference to the Queen of France; it will

reoccur throughout the play. What significance do you think it has?

5. What is the relationship between Gar and his father? Point out specific references which help you to discover this relationship.
6. Do you think Katie is as much in love with Gar as he seems to be with her? Why does Gar tell her about the egg money? How does Katie react?
7. How does Gar react to Katie's father? What is Senator Doogan's attitude toward Gar?
8. What is the importance to Madge of the birth of her grandniece? What is your attitude toward Madge? What is her relationship with Gar? How do you think she feels about his leaving?
9. What does the conversation between father and son at tea tell us about life in Ballybeg?
10. What does Master Boyle's conversation with Gar reveal about their relationship and about life in Ballybeg? What is Master Boyle's vision of American society? Why do you think this episode ends as it does?

Episode II

1. What does the letter from Aunt Lizzie tell us about her? How do you react to her attitude toward her husband and Ben? Why is it important for her that Gar come to live with them?
2. What are the attitudes of Ned, Tom, and Joe toward each other and toward Gar? What sort of things do they talk about? What does their conversation tell you about them and about life in Ballybeg?
3. Private says about "The Boys" "No one will ever know or understand the fun there was; for there <u>was</u> fun and there <u>was</u> laughing — foolish, silly fun and foolish, silly laughing; but what it was all about you can't remember, can you?" What do you think he means?
4. What do you make of Gar's reaction to Katie's visit? Does his repetition of Master Boyle's description of American society tell you anything? Is he reacting against the society or against Katie as a person?

Episode III

1. The religious devotion of the recitation of the Rosary is a nightly ritual in many Irish homes. How does Gar view this religious ritual? What meaning, if any, does it have for him?
2. What is the importance of the fishing expeditions to Lough na Cloc Clor to Gar? Why do you think he remembers this as vividly as he does?
3. Is the Canon a caricature of the Priest? What do you think he represents in his attitude toward Gar and toward S.B.? What does his presence and his conversation tell us about life in Ballybeg?
4. What does Canon's final line mean?
5. What does S.B. remember most about his son? Why do you think he tells this memory to Madge and not to Gar? Do you think Aunt Lizzie's assessment of the O'Donnell's — "kinda cold" — is correct?
6. Madge in her final long speech says that Gar and his father are "as like as two peas." Do you think she is correct?
7. Why do you think Gar has to leave?

General Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the music for the meaning of the play? Often musical interludes slow down the action of a play. Do you think that is true in this play?
2. What are the differences between Public Gar and Private Gar? Do you think that the other characters — or that all people — have a Public and a Private side? Which is the truer side of the self?
3. This is a play about memory and memories. What is the importance of memory to an individual? How true are memories?
4. The play carries a mood of aloneness and loneliness? Are there any characters who are not lonely?
5. What are the significant images used in the play? How are they developed?
6. Repetition of conversation underscores a sense of ritual in the play. What is the effect on the lives of the characters of these rituals?

7. Do the insert memory scenes slow down the action of the play? What is the function of each in relationship to the character of Gar?
8. Several times in the play there are references to film techniques. Do you think this play would make a good film? Discuss.
9. How would you describe the comedy of this play? Are there any purely comic characters? How close to tears is the laughter?
10. Gar's dream of life in American society is based on notions derived from movies and television. How would you characterize his vision of American society? How does his vision of American society differ from his life in Ireland?
11. Gar and S.B. never really come into open conflict but the tensions between father and son are always very near the surface. How would you characterize the relationship between father and son? What do you think are the causes behind the relationship they have? What scenes in the play are important in allowing the viewer to discover the relationship?
12. How effective do you think the memory sequences are in enlarging the scope of the play from the cottage setting? Do you think these scenes are integral to the meaning of the play?
13. In viewing the play, pay particular attention to the facial reactions of Public and Private. How do these non-verbal reactions help to develop meaning?
14. Watch for the blocking of the characters. Note that the director has consistently used spatial distance between characters. What does this tell us? Point out specific examples of such blocking.
15. How well do the actors visualize your conception of the characters? Discuss the costuming of the characters.
16. How effective do you think a recording would be in helping you understand the play? Note, of course, that a videotape can do things that are not possible in a performance of a play in a theater, for example, closeups of character reaction. Would this be distracting or helpful?
17. Point out and discuss significant speeches which you think develop the theme of the play.

Rehearsal Log

Literature, in general, and drama, in particular, are invaluable means for students to gain a more natural understanding of another culture. Students attempting to enact a play or a bit of folklore with some telling effect must both know and feel the quality of another culture. They can more readily understand how their own culture is both different and similar. These ideas became apparent at the rehearsals for this play.

Ms. Kathleen Jonsson, Stage Manager for the production, kept a diary of rehearsals. It is a detailed look into the workings of the theatre as the director and actors come to terms with the play. Relevant excerpts are included here to indicate particular problems faced by American student actors in coming to grips with a play about another culture.

First Rehearsal

> The purpose of tonight's rehearsal will be to listen to the voices in ensemble — making music. The director, J. G. Godwin, wants the cast to learn and experience Brian Friel's words and notes, episode by episode going from general to specific rather than act by act.
>
> All the women in the play mirror each other. Madge is, above all, female; Lizzy is a brassy female. Public and Private should "play off" the women.
>
> Character is the key to the style of the play. The director wants the actors to find the humor of the play and enjoy it. The key to this is to work at getting the character, not to try to explain the character.
>
> Mood is very important in this play. Much is left unsaid and the audience must see this. Basically, it is a play about memory.
>
> The actors discover that Friel uses great economy of words — adjectives, adverbs, pronouns.
>
> Public must listen to Private as if he is visualizing his own inner thoughts.
>
> Note to Madge: Madge is constantly busy, working, occupied. Her presence should be pervasive; therefore, her interruptions are important. When she interrupts Gar, only Public responds; Private is subjugated. . . .What are the two sides of Madge like — her own public and private?

Irish people often switch in the middle of a sentence to an entirely different thought. The actors are being thrown by this convention.

Note to Madge: Why has she raised Gar? Whom does Madge love?

There is unity in the "tea" sequence. The point is, that something else is obviously on your mind if you don't drink your tea right away.

Note to Private: What does Private do while Public talks to Madge?

The cast has questions about the meaning of the line "It is now sixteen years since I saw the Queen of France . . ." but the director doesn't want to try for an interpretation so soon. He wants the cast to formulate their own ideas.

Note from the Stage Manager: There is a great deal of love in the play.

Father and son relationship: Embarrassment. Can't teach two old dogs new tricks. In Eugene O'Neill's LONG DAYS JOURNEY INTO NIGHT it's the image of "can't change the spots on a leopard's back."

Does Gar use singing to divert his struggle?

Note from the Director: Don't force for results; study the feelings.

Boyle and Con are mirrors of each other; Madge and Kate are mirrors of each other; Lizzie and Mary are mirrors of each other.

Second Rehearsal

We listen to music — Irish music. Some lyrics are not clear but the music creates a mood. The reactions of the cast to the music — melancholy, sensitive, quiet, soothing, longing.

Concept for Lizzie: She's with all the other Gallagher girls — dead — except that she's the only one alive.

Lizzie wants Gar as her own baby. Underneath is a mixture of admiration and antagonism for S.B. O'Donnell.

We look at slides of the Irish countryside. They're very poignant — open land, two women walking along a road; calm beauty; hills and fences — beautiful but lonely.

Third Rehearsal

The director asked the cast to give him a summary of their individual backgrounds – education, religion, ethnic background. He tells them to begin using library sources to get deeper insights into Irish culture.

Episode III opens with a ritual – the rosary so the Director wants to give everyone a ritual to participate in so they can relate to it better. There is a heavy emphasis on ritual and routine in the play.

Note for Private: Memory plays tricks on us so watch for purposeful contradictions in the script.

What type of house do these people live in?

Questions for the cast – What character in the play is not in a state of loneliness?

The director talks with the actors about planning in their imaginations what each character would be doing when he or she is off-stage.

Katie asks a question – Does Katie know Private Gar?

Unity – "Silence is the enemy."

The director asks the cast about their reactions to the play. Private talks of "longing": Public says "Public has to leave, but Private wants to stay."

The boys are a trio. Joe is torn between fidelity to the boys and loyalty to Gar. The Boys have separated from the others in the cast. They sit together, a table apart from the others.

Key -- All characters have a public and private side.

It is a realistic play but the set – hopefully – will be nostalgic and poetic.

Fourth Rehearsal

How does Madge satisfy the needs of her two men – spoils them, bosses them, feeds them, acts confident?

Question to the cast – Why haven't the characters learned to express their love?

Pervasive unity – Barrenness

The director wants to leave the audience with the thought — "What's going to happen to these people?"

Friel's use of the "man" as in Private's "aw, man - c'mon man" is different from our use of the term. It's more like "Oh, God."

Fifth Rehearsal

Question — Why did S.B. wait till 40 to get married? Irish men, particularly in the country districts, have a tendency to marry late.

The actors are blocking themselves in symmetrical patterns which I think is an attempt at some kind of order.

Gar is a shy-aggressive Romantic.

Sixth Rehearsal

The cast goes through the ritual of the rosary. The purpose is to get the ritualistic feelings and pattern, yet retain the human aspect of involvement in ritual.

Note to Lizzie: She's looking for the son she never had to "save" her. She's impulsive, a toucher, a cliff-hanger. Con is quiet and patient. Ben does not get emotionally involved.

Cinematic images throughout the play.

What is attractive about Lizzie?

Her desire to be loved yet her inability to show it;
Her sense of humor and fun;
Her sense of herself;
Her femininty;
Her vulnerability.

Laughter covers the very serious underside.

Seventh Rehearsal

We're working tonight on getting the emotion of the characters; the cast must stop intellectualizing them.

Important line — "Won't the house be quiet soon enough?"

Eighth Rehearsal

Members of the cast who have less to do will have a tough time fitting in, probably because they're not here to see all the emtional flow.

Gar plays imaginary games all the time.
Image of America from the play – restlessness.

Ninth Rehearsal

It's not a pessimistic play; it's an optimistic one.
Nobody calls S.B. by his first name except the Canon and Master Boyle. Why?

Why did S.B. go to Katie's wedding?

Tenth Rehearsal

Director's note to all the actors: "Don't be afraid to get the lilt of the language."

The Director adds songs for The Boys – bawdy street songs.
Various actors must relate to things on the stage.
S.B. – The shop; Madge – The scullery; Public – The bedroom; Private – Everything.

Eleventh Rehearsal

The Director wants the actors to develop body attitudes toward the other actors, to establish their individual relationships to their environments.

Note from the director: S.B.'s presence must be felt throughout the play.

Twelfth Rehearsal

Director's note to Lizzie: As you progress in the scene, become more Irish. Pronunciation of Gar changes; touch people more and more as the scene goes on.
Lizzie's line concerning "Bonzo" will be changed to "Bozo"; our audience will relate to it better.
Running through the scene, Private comes off with an Irish brogue that made us all laugh. Funny how creative ideas emerge by themselves when you are fatigued – possibly because instinct is predominating.

Thirteenth Rehearsal

This play has never been made into a movie. Ironically, it reads like a scenario.

Private can smoke cigarettes if he wants; but if he does it means that public doesn't — for a reason.

Fourteenth Rehearsal

The Director has added a pantomine dream sequence before the dialogue in Episode II. During the first verse of the song, lights go to half, then slow fade. The second verse, S.B.enters kitchen from the shop; looks around, sighs, then exits into shop. Third verse Katie enters from the scullery door, floats into Gar's bedroom, stands by his bed a moment watching him, then joins him on the bed. He rolls over on his side (rejecting her — his back to her) and she gets up and crosses to scullery door. Just before her exits, she turns back and says (after the final note of the song), "Goodby Gar." She goes off. Then Madge comes in immediately (she is the transition from the dream into reality), hears Gar's music, frowns lovingly and exits. The rest of the action continues as written by Friel.

Fifteenth Rehearsal

Tremendous self-consciousness in actors while working out the blocking for the recall love scene.

Sixteenth Rehearsal

Public has gotten a haircut. It changes his whole appearance.
Important Point: Private's line about Boyle — "He's a sorry wreck too." Who else is?

Seventeenth Rehearsal

Director's note to Private: Get meaning not only through the use of volume. Get intensity through the quality of speech and the rate. Don't just use volume; but at the same time don't lose the projection of the character.

Pervasive feeling — Private's line to Boyle — "There's something about you . . ."

Important line: Public's — ". . . for no reason at all except that we - that you - were happy. D'you remember? D'you remember?"

Eighteenth Rehearsal

Director's note to all actors: Watch out for anticipations; it makes for sloppiness.

Note about Lizzie: Even the brash characters are likeable.

Props in eating scene – perhaps soup or some kind of stew with bread will make this scene easier for the actors to talk and eat at the same time – always a headache.

Nineteenth Rehearsal

We discuss the fact that the concerto is a nondescript piece of music; yet it's supposed to rip the guts out of Gar. Why? Possibly because Gar's first exposure to it might have been at Katie's house.
I learned today that Dr. Hanlon won't be able to play the role of Master Boyle because of a kidney operation coming up. That's too bad – he was good for the role and related excellently to the other actors. Now what???

Tonight's rehearsal was a turning point. Lots of things are working; a lot of things got done. Patterns are being established.

Twentieth Rehearsal

Con is excellent at following through visually. The Lizzie scene really came together tonight.
Director's note: Everybody in this scene plays off Lizzie.

Twenty-First Rehearsal

Canon's line – "There's hope for you yet."
Hope for life? Hope for winning a game of checkers?
We actually have to choreograph the voices in the rosary section. Interesting collage of sound.

A new Master Boyle – and everyone has to adjust. The new Boyle got absorbed, concentrating, and leaned on a beam. It almost fell over. He forgot it was only a flimsy set piece. It's true – a set becomes your home after a while.

Twenty-Second Rehearsal

Today most of the Theatre Department showed up for "Official Set-Up." We worked on the set from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. . . . There's still quite a bit left to do but the cast got together and worked physically. We worked hard – good vibes in this show.

Twenty-Third Rehearsal

Director's note: The play ends with an "impression" not a definite

clear image – work for the impression.

The last scene has to give the audience a kick in the guts 20 minutes after they leave the auditorium.

Twenty-Fourth Rehearsal

The boys scene – dialogue overlaps are better. Director is working for clarity but doesn't want to lose the feeling in the scene.

Boyle scene – note from the Director: Don't get too heavy too early in the scene.

Twenty-Fifth Rehearsal

Director's notes: Think love and use that attitude.
I want more variety. Give me more of a pathetic quality. Temper the stridentness but don't lose the aggressiveness.

Lots of work still has to be done on the set, but from my own point of view, we have a pretty good play. Bolts need to be tightened here and there, and people need confidence; but there's a good feeling in the case and crew. We'll be there for opening tomorrow. We've been known to have accomplished miracles in twenty-four hours.

Anglo-Irish Drama

While there were plays performed throughout Ireland in the 19th century, modern Irish drama really dates from a day in 1887 when William Butler Yeats, Edward Martyn and Lady Augusta Gregory met in Coole Park, Lady Gregory's home in Co Galway. Their discussion led to the founding of the Irish Literary Theatre which in a few years was to become the internationally acclaimed Abbey Theatre.

Idealistic but determined, the Founders stated their hopes in an important Manifesto published in 1898:

> We hope to find in Ireland an uncorrupted and imaginative audience trained to listen by its passion for oratory and believe that our desire to bring upon the stage the deeper thoughts and emotions of Ireland will insure for us a tolerant welcome. . . .We will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and easy sentiment as it has been represented, but the home of an ancient idealism. We are confident of the support of all Irish people who are weary of misrepresentation.

A small acting company was assembled and these part time actors were trained by two Dublin brothers William and Frank Fay. The actors were trained in a natural style of acting and speaking which studiously avoided the histrionic bombast then current in the theatre.

The success of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin led to tours in England and the United States. Shortly after the birth of the Irish Free State in 1922, the Abbey Theatre became the first English speaking theatre to receive a government subsidy.

Dublin as a city fostered dramatic activity, both acclaiming and damning the dramatists. Riots broke out following the first production of John Millington Synge's PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD in 1907 and again in 1926 at the premier of Sean O'Casey's THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS.

In the 1950's, the Abbey Theatre building was destroyed by fire. Although plans were immediately started for the new theater, it was not until 1966 that the new theater was completed.

In addition to the Abbey Theatre, Dublin boasts several other important theatres, most notably the Gate Theatre founded by Hilton Edwards and Michael MacLiammoir. Popular professional entertainment is offered at the Gaiety, the Eblana, and the Olympia; Irish drama in Irish is presented at the An Damer; and numerous pocket theatres throughout the city present popular and experimental drama. It was at the Pike Theatre that the first English-speaking production of Samuel Beckett's WAITING FOR GODOT was given. The Annual Dublin Theatre Festival is a delight for playgoers who can see a different play performed by internationally known artists every night for two weeks.

Irish theater has given to the world many internationally acclaimed dramatists — John Millington Synge, William Butler Yeats, Sean O'Casey, Lady Gregory, Paul Vincent Carroll, Brendan Behan, Brian Friel. Among actors and actresses who trained and performed in Ireland are the following internationally known players: Barry Fitzgerald, Sarah Allgood, Orson Welles, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Siobhan McKenna, Arthur Shields, Fiannola Flanagan.

Biographical Background

Brian Friel was born in Omagh, Co., Tyrone, Northern Ireland on January 5, 1929. His father was a teacher and shortly after Brian's birth the family moved to Derry where the father accepted a position in the Long

Tower School.

Following his graduation from the school in which his father taught, Brian, like many other Irish boys, entered St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, to study for the priesthood. Although he received a Bachelor of Arts from there in 1948, he became disillusioned with the idea of the priesthood and in 1949-50 studied at St. Joseph's Training College in Belfast to prepare for a career in teaching.

For the greater part of the next two decades he taught in the primary and intermediate schools in Derry.

In 1962, his first collection of short stories, SAUCER OF LARKS, was published. During this time he was also writing a series of radio plays. In 1963, under a grant from the Northern Ireland Arts Council, he went to Minneapolis to study and observe the work of Tyrone Guthrie. It was here that Friel learned about the reality of the theater and developed his ideas concerning the role of the dramatist. According to Friel the first function of the dramatist is "to entertain, to have audiences enjoy themselves, to move them emotionally, to make them laugh and cry and gasp and hold their breath and sit on the edge of their seats."

His fourth play, PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!, was first produced at the Gate Theatre, Dublin for the 1964 Dublin Theatre Festival. David Merrick brought it to Broadway in 1966 where Friel was acclaimed as a playwright in the tradition of Synge and O'Casey. Subsequent plays produced in Ireland or New York include: THE LOVES OF CASS MAGUIRE (1966), LOVERS (1968), CRYSTAL AND FOX (1968), THE MUNDY SCHEME (1969), and FREEDOM OF THE CITY (1973). VOLUNTEERS, his latest play, premiered at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, in 1975.

In his last two plays, Brian Friel has addressed himself more directly to the Northern Ireland situation than he has in the past. His more usual approach is to examine the cultural, social, and spiritual forces which contribute to the making of Ireland as he knows it. The hallmarks of a Friel play are humor, sometimes broad, sometimes bittersweet, sometimes sardonic but always compassionate.

At present Brian Friel lives in Co. Donegal, Éire with wife and four children.

Further Readings in Anglo-Irish Literature for Students

Drama

Friel, Brian	THE LOVES OF CASS MAGUIRE
Gregory, Lady Augusta	RISING OF THE MOON SPREADING THE NEWS
Johnston, Denis	THE OLD LADY SAYS NO
Keane, J. B.	SIVE THE FIELD
O'Casey, Sean	JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS
Robinson, Lennox	THE WHITEHEADED BOY
Synge, John Millington	THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD RIDERS TO THE SEA
Yeats, William Butler	ON BAILE'S STRAND CATHLEEN NI HOULIHAN
Carroll, Paul Vincent	SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE THE WHITE STEED

Biography

Behan, Brendan	BORSTAL BOY
Bowen, Elizabeth	BOWEN'S COURT
O'Casey, Sean	AUTOBIOGRAPHIES
O'Connor, Frank	AN ONLY CHILD MY FATHER'S SON
O'Crohan, Tomas	THE ISLANDMAN
O'Faolain, Sean	VIVE MOI!
O'Sullivan, Maurice	TWENTY YEARS A-GROWING
Yeats, William Butler	AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Poetry

Among the poets whose work might appeal to students are the following 20th century writers:

Joseph Campbell
Austin Clarke
Padraic Colum
Seamus Heaney
Patrick Kavanagh
Thomas Kinsella

John Montague
William Butler Yeats
Eavan Boland

Early Irish poetry, written in Irish, is available in translation and is to be found in most anthologies of Irish Literature. The most readable translation of the Irish Epic, THE TAIN, is by Thomas Kinsella.

Fiction

Brown, Christy	DOWN ALL THE DAYS
Friel, Brian	SAUCER OF LARKS
Johnston, Jennifer	THE GATES THE CAPTAINS AND THE KINGS
Joyce, James	DUBLINERS A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN
Kavangh, Patrick	TARRY FLYNN
Lavin, Mark	SHORT STORIES
Macken, Walter	THE SCORCHING WIND SEEK THE FAIR LAND THE SILENT PEOPLE
McGahern, John	THE BARRACKS THE DARK
Moore, Brian	CATHOLICS THE EMPEROR OF ICE CREAM THE LONELY PASSION OF JUDITH HEARNE
O'Brien, Flann	AT SWIM TWO BIRDS THE THIRD POLICEMAN
O'Brien, Edna	THE COUNTRY GIRLS THE GIRL WITH GREEN EYES
O'Connor, Frank	SHORT STORIES
O'Faolain, Sean	SHORT STORIES
O'Flaherty, Liam	THE INFORMER FAMINE SHORT STORIES

Bibliography for Teachers

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Boll, Heinrich, tr. L. Vennevitz. IRISH JOURNAL. New York, 1967.

Colum, Padraic, ed. A TREASURE OF IRISH FOLKLORE. New York, 1954.

Ellis-Fermor, Una. THE IRISH DRAMATIC MOVEMENT. London, 1954.

Greene, David, ed. AN ANTHOLOGY OF IRISH LITERATURE. New York, 1954.

MacLiammoir, Michael. THEATRE IN IRELAND. Dublin, 1950.

Mercier, Vivian. THE IRISH COMIC TRADITION. New York, 1969.

O'Connor, Frank. A SHORT HISTORY OF IRISH LITERATURE: A BACKWARD LOOK, New York, 1967.

O'Faolain, Sean. THE IRISH. Harmondsworth, 1947.

"DESCRIPTIONS"

In The American Dream

As social conditions become more equal, the number of persons increases who, although they are neither rich nor powerful enough to exercise any great influence over their fellows, have nevertheless acquired or retained sufficient education and fortune to satisfy their own wants. They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands.

Thus not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

. . . the citizens of a democracy . . . feel themselves subject to the same weakness and the same dangers; and their interest, as well as their sympathy, makes it a rule with them to lend one another assistance when required. The more equal social conditions become, the more do men display this reciprocal disposition to oblige each other. In democracies no great benefits are conferred, but good offices are constantly rendered; a man seldom displays self-devotion, but all men are ready to be of service to one another.

Alexis de Tocqueville

. . . . . .

Whence all this passion towards conformity anyway? — diversity is the word. Let man keep his many parts and you'll have no tyrant states. Why, if they follow this conformity business they'll end up by forcing me, an invisible man, to become white, which is not a color but the lack of one. Must I strive toward colorlessness? But seriously, and without snobbery, think of what the world would lose if that should happen. America is woven of many strands; I would recognize them and let it so remain. It's "winner take nothing" that is the great truth of our country or of any country. Life is to be lived, not controlled; and humanity is won by continuing to play in face of certain defeat. Our fate is to become one, and yet many — This is not prophecy, but description.

Ralph Ellison

. . . . . .